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990 Fairmount Avenue  
St. Paul, MN 55105

April 12, 2017

**VIA EMAIL**

St. Paul City Council  
15 Kellogg Blvd. West  
310 City Hall  
Saint Paul, MN 55102

RE: Appeal to City Council of BZA Grant of Zoning Variances for Linwood School

Dear Members of the St. Paul City Council:

We have lived at 990 Fairmount Avenue for nearly 20 years (since 1998) on the same block as Linwood School. Our two daughters attended Linwood School and, later, St. Paul Central High School. The younger one is a senior at St. Paul Central High School this year. We are strong supporters of St. Paul Public Schools (“SPPS”) and of Linwood School.

We write in connection with the City Council hearing scheduled for April 19, 2017, to consider the appeal from the Board of Zoning Appeals (“BZA”) decision to grant two zoning variances in connection with a large addition onto Linwood School. We hope this letter provides a succinct and clear summary of some of the reasons why the BZA erred in granting the variances and why SPPS has fallen far short of meeting the requirements for the variances set forth in the city ordinances as well as state law.

In order to grant the variances, SPPS must establish the following:

1. The variance is in harmony with the general purposes and intent of the zoning code.
2. The variance is consistent with the comprehensive plan.
3. The applicant has established that there are practical difficulties in complying with the provision and that the property owner proposes to use the property in a reasonable manner not permitted by the provision. Economic considerations alone do not constitute practical difficulties.
4. The plight of the landowner is due to circumstances unique to the property not created by the landowner.
5. The variance will not permit any use that is not allowed in the zoning district where the affected land is located.
6. The variance will not alter the essential character of the surrounding area.

The SPPS variance request does not meet many of these requirements. The project involves both an uncontroversial *modernization* of the existing Linwood School facility and a controversial three-story *addition* that will increase the building footprint by approximately 40% and, between

Letter to City Council regarding Linwood School Addition

footprint and height, add about 39,000 square feet of floor space. Keep in mind that Linwood School is the smallest elementary school site (1.82 acres) in the entire city of St. Paul. The proposed addition would expand the building's footprint to the extent that approximately one-half of the existing open play space between the school and Fairmount Avenue would be eliminated to make room for the new, three-story building.

In public documents and presentations before the Summit Hill Association and elsewhere, SPPS personnel have defended the project as serving two separate and mutually exclusive purposes. First, the existing building needs to be updated in several ways, but particularly to bring it into compliance with various state and federal laws like the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended, 42 U.S.C. §§ 12101, *et seq.* Second, SPPS wants to move an estimated 120-165 students to Linwood from another, larger campus—Monroe—located at 810 Palace Avenue in St. Paul, and the current, much smaller Linwood School building is not large enough to accommodate that 50% enrollment increase. The fact that SPPS wants to make these programming changes does not create a “plight” due to circumstance unique to the property. Instead, the desire of SPPS to move two grades from Monroe is an obstacle created by the landowner in connection with a property that is too small to support such a change, even if it may be desirable from school programming perspective given unlimited land and building space.

Moreover, the BZA appeared to accept SPPS's implication in its variance request and at the BZA hearing that the Linwood School building cannot be modernized without also being expanded and that Linwood School is presently overcrowded. Neither proposition is supported by evidence and both are inaccurate. First, SPPS does not contend that Linwood School is currently overcrowded with its present enrollment of slightly over 300 students. Indeed, the SPPS has conceded publicly at hearings before the Summit Hill Association Zoning and Land Use Committee and elsewhere that the forecasted enrollment increase is the result of SPPS's desire to move pre-kindergarten and fourth grade students (120-165 students in total) from the larger Monroe school facility on Palace Avenue at which they are presently enrolled, rather than circumstances beyond SPPS's control. Moreover, SPPS representatives have conceded publicly at hearings before the Summit Hill Association Zoning and Land Use Committee and elsewhere, that the existing Linwood School building can be modernized to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act and to accommodate its existing enrollment without constructing the oversized addition to Linwood School that the current project proposal contemplates. Such a modernization may require a more modest addition, but the neighbors have always stated that they would support such a proposal.

Even more fundamentally, the proposed addition will alter the essential character of the Summit Hill neighborhood of which Linwood School is a part. A neighborhood's character is determined not merely by the architecture of its structures but by the blending of its structures, streets, open space, and landscaping. This is a residential neighborhood. Single-family houses, duplexes, and small apartment buildings are close to one another but are set back substantially from the streets, leaving wide sight lines. Most of the houses have front porches and yards. The streets are lined with trees and sidewalks. The result is a neighborhood environment that is open, green, pedestrian-friendly, and communitarian. People walk the streets and interact with one another. Like other structures in the neighborhood, the Linwood School presently is set

back from the boundaries of the property. The property behind the building is largely open, with substantial green space and playground equipment.

And, consistent with the neighborhood's character, people walk from all over the neighborhood to the Linwood School playground, which is the only open play space within the pedestrian-friendly boundaries of Grand Avenue, Lexington Parkway, Dale Street, and St. Clair Avenue, and thus is a major meeting point for families who live in the neighborhood. Linwood School's large, grassy field and playground are particularly welcoming for younger children, who can easily walk to the site and play without constant parental supervision. Children do not need to traverse busy streets to get to Linwood School's park and playground, and the nearby residences and use of the park and playground by children enrolled at Linwood School make it an especially safe place for children to play. On any given day, in all seasons, one can find small children playing on Linwood School's playground equipment and children and adults of all ages playing pick-up soccer and baseball, shooting hoops, riding bikes, throwing balls of all types, running, and playing with pets on Linwood School's large, grassy field. Many of these children are Linwood students using the playground after school and on weekends, many are neighborhood children, and some fall into both categories.

On a personal note, our daughters were able to walk to the Linwood School playground on their own as early as age 6, and used it frequently from the time they were toddlers through their high school years. They both learned to ride bicycles on the sidewalks and blacktop in the open area facing Fairmount Avenue. When they were students at Linwood, the playground and open space areas were always full of Linwood students and parents as well as neighborhood children and parents. This remains true today, and we enjoy watching today's parents and children use the open space and playground after school, on summer evenings, and on weekends. It is a true neighborhood gem. The playground has been redesigned and refurbished at least twice since we've lived on Fairmount Avenue (often with the volunteer help of the neighborhood residents), and we welcome new renovations to the open space and play area, as well as the building itself, to meet the needs of Linwood students today.

Nevertheless, the proposed project is fundamentally inconsistent with the historic character of the Summit Hill neighborhood. The project would add a large three-story building that would run only a few feet from the lot line along the Oxford Street side of the property, substantially diminishing the sight lines of the surrounding streets. With its combined footprint and height, the building—rather than the open space—would dominate the property and loom above the surrounding residential structures, detracting from the area's residential character. Linwood School's park and playground space will be substantially reduced. And the alteration would be experienced not only by Linwood School's immediate neighbors, but also by all of the many residents and visitors who walk the neighborhood's streets and use the park and playground.

The most unfortunate part of the present dispute over the SPPS's variance request is how it has created divisions between parents of children who currently attend Linwood School and neighbors in the community, many of whom have sent their children to Linwood School, and are fully aware of the deficiencies of the current building and strongly support renovating the school to address those deficiencies. The school has always been a central part of the neighborhood and the residents would have welcomed the opportunity to work with the school

Letter to City Council regarding Linwood School Addition

to provide input into a proposal to modernize Linwood School, including an addition that is consistent with the character of the surrounding neighborhood. But for reasons that have never been explained, the SPPS never informed the neighbors of Linwood School of the proposal for this massive addition until the official notice in March 2016 that SPPS would be requesting significant variances from the BZA for a major addition to Linwood School at a hearing only 10 days from the date of the notice. It was only quick action by the neighborhood that allowed the request to be delayed until the most recent BZA hearings, but SPPS's actions both prior to and since March 2016 have unnecessarily created adversity between parties who should be working together and have worked together in the past.

Although SPPS has made some modifications to its original variance requests, none of those modifications were made in collaboration with the neighborhood but were instead presented as a fait accompli or in response to requests by the State Historic Preservation Office, which had never been consulted on the original variance requests. If the neighborhood had been included in the planning process, we are certain we could have worked with the SPPS to create a design that would have preserved the important open play space areas on the north side of the school while still renovating and adding to the building footprint. We would still welcome the opportunity to do exactly that.

In sum, we request that you reverse the BZA's decision to grant the variances and direct SPPS to work with the neighborhood to create a design that meets the needs of current and future students and educators at Linwood School as well as the Saint Paul community that surrounds it.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Alexandra B. Klass & Stephen K. Warch  
990 Fairmount Avenue  
St. Paul, MN 55015

cc: Councilmember Dai Thao  
Councilmember Chris Tolbert  
Councilmember Jane L. Prince  
Councilmember and Council President Russ Stark  
Councilmember Amy Brendmoen  
Councilmember Dan Bostrom  
Councilmember Rebecca Noecker

April 18, 2017

City Council  
310 City Hall  
15 West Kellogg Boulevard  
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Dear Council President Stark and Members of the Council,

Faced with an appeal to the two variances granted by the Board of Zoning Appeals for the expansion and renovation to Linwood Monroe Arts Plus Elementary School located at 1023 Osceola Avenue (lower campus), we would like to directly address several misleading assertions provided in the appeal documents.

The purpose of the variances for SPPS is multifaceted and thoroughly outlined in variance and Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) documents. The need for the variance is not only to accommodate moving prekindergarten and 4<sup>th</sup> grade to this elementary school site from the middle school campus (810 Palace; upper campus) as the appellants' introduction claims, but also to correct the myriad of deficiencies that both schools contend with daily:

At Linwood /Lower Campus (1023 Osceola) these deficiencies include:

- Sharing a single space for gym, theater and cafeteria functions.
- Classrooms that are far smaller than current educational standards recommend.
- The limited access to accessible restrooms on every floor.
- A lack of break-out spaces for assisting children in need of individualized learning assistance (an activity currently inadequately accommodated with tables set in corridors).
- Antiquated and inefficient mechanical systems that occasionally require students to wear coats in order to stay warm during cold winter days.

Similarly, at Monroe/Upper Campus (810 Palace) deficiencies include:

- Classrooms that are far smaller than current educational standards recommend.
- Inadequate facilities to support the arts-focused mission of the school.
- Contrary to best practices, grade configurations mix young and older students.
- Antiquated and inefficient mechanical systems.

The January 9, 2017, application for the two variances thoroughly outlines the process by which St. Paul Public Schools (SPPS) has engaged the community to provide input on the project and enlisted the assistance of design professionals, educators, demographers and experts in child development to design a Facilities Master Plan (FMP) that would bring the district's 72 facilities into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. These efforts focus on classroom sizes, accessibility, safety, inclusiveness, community, technology and energy efficiency to name a few of the goals that were prioritized during the FMP. These goals are all in an effort to support current learning expectations, education best practices, and importantly, *equity* for all students and teachers.

St. Paul's Board of Zoning Appeals has a long history of granting variances to schools of all types for building height and lot coverage in residential districts. Details comparing how these previously granted variance requests relate to those proposed at Linwood School can be found below in our response to the appellant's "Factual Background" arguments. To our knowledge, after consulting zoning staff, no school in the city of St. Paul has been denied a variance request or has had their approved variances appealed. While we fully understand that each variance is thoroughly considered on a case-by-case basis and no variance is granted merely by association with a precedent, we also know that Linwood is not dissimilar from these precedents other than its location in the Summit Hills Neighborhood and within a State Historic District.

SPPS and U+B Architecture and Design are committed to the sensitivity that buildings located in historic neighborhoods warrant. As such, in conjunction with our professional historic preservation consultants, we have consulted with and received approval on the project from the St. Paul Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) and the Minnesota Historic Preservation Office (MNHPO). We have incorporated their comments to ensure the proposal is a conscientious addition to a contributing structure in an historic district that follows the U.S. Department of the Interiors recommendations for additions to historic structures.

In addition to the historic review, the project has been the subject of extensive review by a number of other regulatory bodies. In conjunction with the EAW that was performed for the project, the Metropolitan Council, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, and U.S. Corps of Engineers provided no exception to the proposed project. The project also has preliminary approval from the Capitol Region Watershed District for storm water issues, Minnesota Department of Health for food establishment issues, and St. Paul Site Plan Review staff for a myriad of public works, utility and zoning issues. Even though the scale of the project is significantly under the threshold that would require a formal traffic study, one was performed for the project at the expense of SPPS and is currently under review by the City of St. Paul's Traffic Engineering. The level of regulatory review this project has undertaken is far and above what it is typically required for projects of this sort and has already resulted in a full year's delay on construction progress for both campuses of Linwood Monroe Arts Plus School.

All of these efforts outlined above, many of which are thoroughly documented in the Variance Application and EAW documents that are part of the public record, prove that improvements to Linwood School are sensitive to the needs of the community, as well as those of students, to ensure the longevity of the facility for decades to come. These efforts were further recognized by City staff with their recommendation to approve the variances and the BZA's subsequent approval of the variances after hearing public comment.

We would like to reference several specific elements of the appeal request that we feel are presented without the larger context of information from which they came, thus providing a biased presentation of facts in the appeal. (Note: The following sections are numbered to correspond with the appellants' letter.)

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The appellants claim that the neighbors were never given the opportunity to work with the school to provide input. As clearly outlined in the variance request, SPPS contacted the Summit Hill Association for neighborhood involvement with the FMP on multiple occasions over the course of two years in advance of the original March 2016 Variance Application. After that original Variance Application, SPPS quickly recognized that further neighborhood engagement efforts were warranted. The initial Variance Application, submitted over a year ago, was withdrawn in order to ensure community input was heard. SPPS and U+B Architecture openly acknowledge that the engagement with neighborhood stakeholders since March 2016 has been valuable in reducing the number and scale of variances and has, overall, made the project better. A summary of how revisions to the project have addressed neighborhood concerns is outlined in Attachment C to the Variance Application, "Response to Neighbors Concerns," on pages 71-74 of 95.

## 3. FACTUAL BACKGROUND

Linwood School is not the smallest elementary school site in St. Paul. While it is the second smallest elementary school site for SPPS, it is not an outlier in comparison to many elementary schools within SPPS and there are numerous examples of smaller private and charter school sites in the city, many with lot coverages larger than those granted to SPPS for Linwood School. For example, Community of Peace Academy (471 Magnolia Ave. E.) is a 1.58 acre site that was granted a lot coverage of 48% (12% variance) in 2006. In 1999, St. Paul City Primary School (260 Edmund Ave. W.), a .77 acre site, was granted a lot coverage of 40% (10% variance in a RT1 district). St. Agnes School (530 Lafond Ave.) was granted a lot coverage of 41.3% (6.5% variance) in 2014. For reference, none of these schools have the playground area, sport court area, or contiguous green play field space on their sites as Linwood School will have after the proposed addition is complete. The project proposed at Linwood with a lot coverage variance of 3.5% above the allowable 35% limit will provide more playground space, more efficient play field space, and more efficient sport court space that will allow many opportunities for outdoor play for both students and neighbors.

The appellants indicate heights of 62 feet. The variance request is for 17 feet for a total of 47 feet to match existing building heights. This strictly follows the zoning rules for defining building height. For comparison, St. Paul Academy (1712 Randolph) was granted a 20.1 foot variance for a total of 50.1 feet in 2014. More recently, the BZA approved a height variance of 10.25 feet for SPPS' Adams Spanish Immersion School (615 S Chatsworth) for a total of 40.25 feet. The spirit of the variance for the addition to the Adams School is directly analogous to the strategy at Linwood School: match the building height to the original 1920's vintage school.

The appellants claim that 85% of the neighborhood opposes the variances; however, they have not provided information on how this percentage was obtained or on the field of survey. From the list of appellants, it appears there are 29 unique addresses. Of those 29, only 19 (out of a total of approximately 90) properties are located within a 350 foot radius of Linwood School.

The appellants also indicate that Linwood School is in the midst of an historic survey which could

result in an historic designation. SPPS, U+B Architecture and our historical consultants (Hess Roise and Company) have conducted an extensive historic review of the site. As previously mentioned, the proposed work on the site has been thoroughly vetted for historic issues as a result of the EAW and in consultation with the St. Paul Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) and Minnesota Historic Preservation Office (MNHPO). As requested by MNHPO, SPPS and Hess Roise and Company are completing a Level II Minnesota Historic Property Record survey prior to the demolition work associated with the project. This survey, which includes 35mm documentation photography, is solely for the purpose of providing archival documentation of the property before the demolition of the 1922 smoke stack, boiler room and coal room. The property's designation as a "contributing resource" in the State Historic Hill district has been previously established and no other designation is being reviewed or has been requested by SPPS (the property owner). In regards to the property's current designation, the MNHPO has determined that "the addition to Linwood School, as currently proposed, has been designed in accordance with the [Secretary of the Interior's] Standards and will not cause additional adverse effects to the Historic Hill District."

The appellants claim that SPPS has not considered alternatives that would mitigate the need for these variances. To the contrary, in 2016, SPPS completed a 20-month facilities master planning process that examined exhaustive quantitative and qualitative data--engaging more than a thousand people in the process--to produce a comprehensive 10-year plan to modernize each of its 72 buildings to better meet the 21st century learning needs of its students. This extensive, holistic examination of its school facilities has provided SPPS with a clear picture of the options available for each of its schools, including Linwood, which has resulted in its current plans to expand and remodel that facility. It is also worth noting that the enrollment being proposed for the Linwood building is entirely in keeping with how the site has been used throughout its 96-year history. In the last few decades, the building has housed, K-3, K-6, and K-12 programs, frequently with enrollments over 500. The proposed enrollment of the school as part of these renovations is within 11% of the average enrollment over the last 45 years.

For the alternatives that the applicant lists, here is our understanding of SPPS' counter reasonings:

- A. **Applicant suggestion:** Reducing the Linwood expansion by not moving either Pre-K or 4th grade.
- Linwood Monroe Arts Plus is a PreK-8 school composed of two separate campuses referred to as a Lower Campus and Upper Campus. Currently, the Upper Campus (Monroe) houses the prekindergarten program along with grades 4-8 while the Lower Campus (Linwood) houses grades K-3. The remodeling plans for the Linwood and Monroe sites include moving prekindergarten and grade 4 to Linwood/Lower Campus to align grade continuity and provide a smooth PreK-4 grade transition for children.

Aligning Linwood's educational program in this way is in the best interest of students. The research is clear that early education--birth to 3rd grade--is the most critical time for ensuring children's long-term academic success. Studies show that the achievement gap starts to widen at 4th grade. As such, maintaining stability for students at this age where they have formed long-term relationships with staff and



peers is critical to student success. In addition, the building facilities (e.g., toilets and sinks) and resources (e.g., books, equipment) at the Linwood/ Lower Campus are designed to accommodate younger, smaller children unlike the Monroe/Upper Campus which is sized for older children which makes it more programmatically and fiscally efficient.

- If Pre-K and 4<sup>th</sup> grade did not move out of the Monroe/Upper Campus building, then that facility would not be able to move forward with its renovation plans to provide equitably-sized classrooms and inclusive facilities. Currently, classrooms that are only 650 square feet are serving middle school students in cramped conditions. By moving Pre-K and 4<sup>th</sup> grade out of the building, classrooms can be enlarged to serve today's education standards.
- Reducing the Linwood expansion by not moving either Pre-K or 4th grade is contrary to the strategic need to expand and strengthen the district's creative arts K-12 pathway which serves students across the city.

B. **Applicant suggestion:** Moving Linwood students to another underutilized site, such as Galtier, a brand new multimillion dollar building [it should be noted **this is a factual error** as the building was built in the 1970s; SPPS made recent renovations to the building totaling approximately \$3 million] or Obama Elementary which has a capacity of 928 students and enrollment is just 438.

- Apart from the blatant disregard such a programmatic swap would be to the communities at these schools who took part in months of FMP planning to set a tangible vision for each school, there are numerous reasons such a swap is not feasible:
  - The district is divided into seven attendance areas which are loosely aligned to the city's neighborhood or area districts (see page 12 for a school district map). Dividing the school district in this way provides SPPS with manageable areas to deliver comparable school programs equitably to families throughout the city while keeping transportation costs down.

While inhabiting different campuses, Linwood and Monroe are part of the same school, which together offer families in the district's F1 Attendance Area a PreK-8 school option as well as providing Areas D, F1 and F2 with a creative arts magnet program. As such, if one of those campuses were moved outside Area F1 it would essentially dismantle the Linwood Monroe arts program and leave an entire area of the district without an arts program option.

The most efficient and cost-effective way to maintain the current Linwood Monroe Arts Plus program is to keep the programs where they are--which are less than two miles from one another--

and expand the Linwood campus to meet programmatic and student needs.

- Moving Linwood to Obama (located in Area F1) or Galtier (located in Area E, which is outside Linwood’s attendance area) would create a domino effect that would supplant one program for another and create a substantial disruption to student learning for two school communities. Additionally, simply switching one program with the other, such as Obama, is not feasible programmatically for a dual campus as Obama is six miles from the Monroe Upper Campus. Also, a switch like this would not prevent the need to modernize and update the Linwood building to meet the 21st century learning needs of whichever student body inhabits that facility. And as a final point, through its FMP process, SPPS met with the Obama school community to envision how its facilities can best meet their needs and identified strategies to bolster Obama’s low enrollment to optimize its program. SPPS is in the midst of a plan to complement its current program by transforming Obama into an early education learning hub with comprehensive family supports that will serve a wide swath of the city.

C. **Applicant suggestion:** Building a new school at an existing SPPS site such as 900 Albion Avenue (currently up for sale by SPPS) or purchasing a new property such as the one that was recently purchased by SPPS at 1050 Kent St. N. to relocate one of its programs, RiverEast School.

- The Albion Street lot is not conducive for a school site due to the awkward triangular shape of the site and unsafe site access due to its intersection with multiple busy streets on West 7th. Also, the parcel of land the building sits on is too small to accommodate the needs of a school once all setback requirements are met. Because of these issues, the site is not feasible for the needs of a modern school which is why SPPS has that property up for sale.
- The purchase of the 1050 Kent St. property for RiverEast was done because the school is currently co-located with another school program that needs the full site to grow its program. Purchasing a new property to move Linwood to would leave the current space unused which would be an unsound fiscal decision and use of taxpayer money.

D. **Applicant suggestion:** Expanding or renovating Monroe’s Upper Campus, both at the existing building and on the open lot across the street that is owned by Parks and Recreation.

- There is no adjoining land to build a new addition to the existing Monroe facility. If the addition were to be built on the open lot across the street, student safety would be at

risk as they would need to cross the street from the main building to the other.

- The existing Monroe building will be renovated for equitably-sized classrooms and inclusive facilities. This renovation depends on the Linwood addition moving forward because it cannot be renovated until the Pre-K and 4<sup>th</sup> grade students move out of the building. The space currently occupied by these younger students is needed to increase the size of the tiny 650 square feet classrooms and provide common areas for community interaction and learning that the building lacks. The renovation also updates outdated building systems, and cleans up corridors that have been blocked by stairwells over the many eras of additions that have occurred on this site.

## 5. FACTUAL ERRORS IN THE BZA PROCEEDINGS

The appellants identify several perceived factual errors in the staff report, but we believe many of these are merely misunderstandings of the statements made in the report. Our responses to these identified factual errors are as follow:

Factual Error #1: The staff report omits the transfer of Pre-K and 4<sup>th</sup> grade to Linwood School as a purpose for the project.

Response: The staff report clearly identifies moving Pre-K and 4<sup>th</sup> grade to the Linwood site as one of the motivations for the project; see paragraph 4 on page 5.

The relocation of Pre-K and 4<sup>th</sup> grade students out of the middle school to the Linwood campus is considered best practice for stronger cognitive, social and emotional development in young children which is promoted by keeping younger peer groups together in an environment that establishes longer peer and teacher-student relationships. Pre-K and 4<sup>th</sup> grade students in a middle school environment is not conducive to providing the right learning environment for elementary-age students and also produces a shorter-term relationship with elementary staff for both campuses.

Factual Error #2: The staff report makes the false statement that there is an inherent need to make any addition three-stories tall.

Response: SPPS does not and has never claimed that a three-story addition was needed strictly “*for the purpose of matching the height of the existing building.*” The purpose of matching the three-story height of the addition is in an effort to maintain a reduced request for lot coverage, and maintain a reasonable amount of green space and play space while simultaneously adjusting the facility to meet 21<sup>st</sup> century educational, accessibility, environmental, electrical and mechanical standards (i.e., code and best practices) for a contiguous Pre-K – 4<sup>th</sup> grade elementary school. Accommodating current educational standards in a 1920’s school building has proven a practical difficulty in even remotely meeting standards with an antiquated notion of learning environments and building systems.

Factual Error #3: The staff report makes references to sections in the Comprehensive Plan that do not exist.

Response: The section of the Comprehensive Plan that was noted in the Staff Report and that appellants claim does not exist can be found in the “Transportation Plan” chapter, part 2.4 on page 10. Zoning staff have further stated that the “City’s Comprehensive Plan recognizes that economic sustainability is driven by quality schools which [...] attract new populations while redevelopment renews the built environment.” Additional specific references showing how the proposed project is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan can be found in the Variance Application on pages 15-19 (100-104) and 28-29 (112-114).

Factual Error #4: The recommendation received from the District Council (Summit Hill Association) was not correctly identified in the staff report.

Response: During variance proceedings on February 13, 2017, City staff clearly stated that the District Council’s recommendation had been received after the Staff Report was released and that the District Council recommendation was, in fact, to deny all of the variances. As such, District Council recommendations were correctly identified for BZA commissioners before any voting occurred.

Factual Error #5: Statements in the staff report regarding the age of the existing playground and the history of the north playfields are false.

Response: Historic satellite images from Ramsey County GIS clearly show that prior to 2011 the bulk of the north landscape was covered with asphalt. Historic images show this being the condition at least as far back as 1991. These satellite images also show that between 2003 and 2011, the space that is currently a grass playfield was shared with temporary classrooms. While we do not contest the fact that the north side has consistently been used as outdoor play space for the school, the nature of that play space has only been the pristine grass field that the appellants espouse for the last few years. The current grass playfields came as a result of a letter campaign by Linwood School’s first graders requesting the asphalt be removed and grass installed. In 2011, SPPS was able to oblige and spent about two years establishing the turf. An outline of the historical landscape on the north side of the building is included in the EAW “Technical Report” prepared by our historical consultants on page 9 of the report.

The existing north playground was constructed in 1999, and while it is still functional, the expected life span of commercial playground equipment is approximately 20 years and so this equipment is nearing the end of its useful life. The configuration of the proposed playground will offer better access for those with disabilities as well as more opportunities for accessible playground equipment. Students from the school and children from the neighborhood alike will benefit from a new, accessible and safe playground.

Factual Error #6: SPPS has been misleading concerning their reduced height variance request.

Response: This complaint was noted in the Response to Comments document for the EAW. See the section on “Building Height” on page 8. SPPS and U+B Architecture have been clear throughout the process that their intention was to align the heights of the proposed addition with those of the existing building.

## 6. LEGAL ERRORS IN THE BZA PROCEEDINGS

Most of the issues identified by the appellants as legal errors were addressed as part of the variance proceedings or as part of the EAW. We encourage council members to review those documents for formal responses from SPPS, City staff and other regulatory agencies. Also within the Variance Application, please find a thorough outline of how the project addresses all six of the criteria by which variances are assessed including each of the intents and purposes of the zoning code listed under Criteria 1. The outline of each of these criteria and our response is included in the Application on pages 9-22 for the lot coverage variance and on pages 23-30 for the height variance. Additional commentary on specific items identified by appellants is as follows:

### Scale and Character

In their appeal, appellants state that “aesthetics, size, scale, and siting of the building as inappropriate to the historic character of the neighborhood.” In letters from the Minnesota Historic Preservation Office, historic professionals from that office state that “the proposed addition appears to be in conformance with the (Secretary of Interior’s) standards in terms of overall massing, size, and scale.” The conclusion on this matter in the Record of Decision for the EAW states, “The mass and scale of the addition is not considered a substantial adverse effect on the historic integrity of the property.” (page 9) As previously stated, we have worked closely with historic consultants and regulatory bodies to ensure the proposal is a conscientious addition to a contributing structure in an historic district.

### Access to Light

The appellants reference “adequate access to light” as a factor that is not satisfied and that was not addressed by the BZA. U+B Architecture performed three sun and shadow studies that were included with the Variance Application and with the EAW. The appellants have provided diagrams and images from these sun and shadow studies out of context and have thus biased the conclusions of those studies. For complete information, please reference pages 24-25 (109-110), “Attachment H” and “Attachment I” of the Variance Application and pages 20-21 and “Appendix B” in the Findings of Fact and Record of Decision document for the EAW. These studies show that shadows created by the proposed addition are comparable to (and in many case less) a zoning-compliant building built to the setbacks would be. Given the amount of setback from the north property line, the properties directly to the north across Fairmount are largely unaffected by shadows created by the addition. Properties to the east and west will experience short periods of additional shadow only when sun angles are very low (i.e., late/early in the day and at seasonal extremes. At these times, boulevard trees are likely to have just as much or more impact on shadows as buildings do. The conclusion in the EAW on this matter was that “the impact of shadows is not significant in scope or nature to these properties or the district as a whole.”

## Recreation

The appellants argue that the addition represents a loss of their playground and recreation space and cite a 40% reduction in open play space as a result of the project. We are uncertain how appellants arrived at this 40% number, but can only surmise that this is based on an incorrect and selective view of the site without consideration of the site as a whole. Once the project is complete, the aggregate available amount of playground space will increase for both students at the school and children in the neighborhood. In preparation for the addition, SPPS constructed a playground on the southwest corner of the site. Once the addition is complete, the existing north playground will have been replaced by a new comparably-sized, accessible and safe playground. Also, a comparably-sized, but much more efficient sport-court area with two new basketball hoops and four-square game stripes will have replaced the existing asymmetric sport court. While smaller than the existing field, the new turf play field will be more efficiently proportioned and will be able to accommodate a regulation U8 soccer field. Overall, open space on the site (including landscaped areas) will be reduced by approximately 24%. Outdoor play space (playgrounds and play fields), however, will only be reduced by approximately 10.5%.

This loss in outdoor play space pays dividends for students at the school as the addition represents a tremendous increase in indoor recreation opportunity. Currently, access to the gymnasium is restricted when the space is being used as a cafeteria during the middle of the day. This severely limits the availability of indoor space for play and physical education, especially during the cold winter months. With its new cafeteria, the addition affords students and teachers full access to the gym for recreation and physical education activities throughout the day. This improvement is especially valuable on those days where access to outdoor play space is impacted by inclement weather.

For neighbors, the newly renovated site, while smaller, will offer higher-quality amenities with a new and larger playground, new sport court, and a better organized play field. It is also worth noting that in addition to the outdoor recreation space they will have access to at Linwood School, the majority of the appellants are less than  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile away from the Linwood Recreation Center, one of the larger parks and community centers in St. Paul.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

SPPS is committed to providing educational facilities that meet the rigorous demands of 21<sup>st</sup> century learning environments and in doing so supports the best interests of their students and the communities in which they reside. The proposed project at Linwood School has been extensively considered by SPPS staff, their design professionals, consultants, members of the public, and city and state regulators. The project enjoys the full support of parents, teachers, SPPS staff and School Board of Education. As a magnet school that serves the greater St. Paul community, the project also enjoys broad support from concerned community members across the city. This is evidenced by the petition organized by parent groups that has accumulated over one thousand signatures in support of the project. Proposed improvements to both campuses of the Linwood Monroe Arts Plus School have already been delayed and are dependent on the variances already granted by the Board of

Zoning Appeals with the support of City Zoning staff. We encourage the City Council to further show their support, deny the appeal, and permit the variances granted to Linwood School stand as granted by the Board of Zoning Appeals.

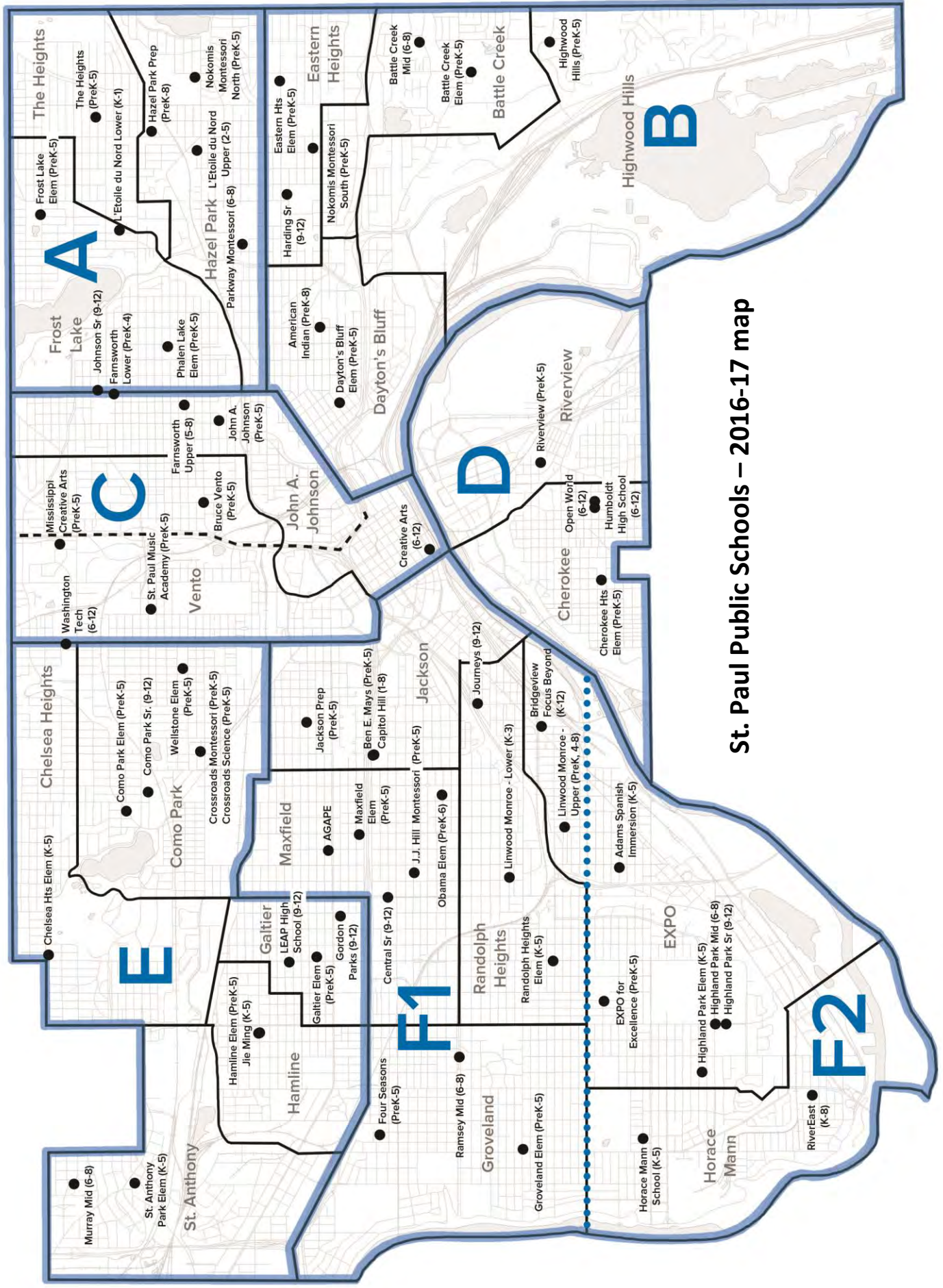
Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nate Golin", with a long vertical line extending downwards from the end of the signature.

**Nate Golin, AIA**

Project Architect, Associate  
U+B Architecture & Design  
2609 Aldrich Ave. S, Suite #100  
Minneapolis, MN 55408





St. Paul Public Schools – 2016-17 map



**From:** From: Cari Gillen-O'Neel [<mailto:advocatesforlmap@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** Tuesday, April 11, 2017 4:05 PM

**To:** Benner II, Jerome (CI-StPaul) <[jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>

**Subject:** Letter of Support for LMAP Variance

From: Cari Gillen-O'Neel

Email Address:

Address: 6xx Laurel Ave. St. Paul 55104

Relationship to LMAP: a supporter of public education in St. Paul

I strongly support the two variances granted to Linwood Monroe Arts Plus to bring buildings on both of its campuses into the 21st century. As a supporter of public education in St. Paul, I encourage you to as well.

The two zoning variances are essential for Linwood Monroe Arts Plus to continue to provide the top-quality education for which the Saint Paul Public Schools are known. As a developmental psychologist, I know that research suggests that school facility quality is linked to higher student attendance and achievement (e.g., see Durán-Narucki, 2008 and Maxwell, 2016). And as a resident of St. Paul, I know that high-quality public schools benefit the entire community. Initially, the opposition to these variances brought up some valid points (e.g., aesthetics, green space), but the revised (current) plans completely address these concerns. I hope that you will support the requested variances, too. Thank you for your service.

Sincerely,

Cari Gillen-O'Neel

**From:** Paula Faughender [<mailto:advocatesforlmap@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** Monday, April 10, 2017 6:33 PM

**To:** #CI-StPaul\_Ward2 <[Ward2@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:Ward2@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>

**Cc:** Benner II, Jerome (CI-StPaul) <[jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>

**Subject:** Letter of Support for LMAP Variance

From: Paula Faughender

Email Address:

Address: 6xx Victoria St. S., St. Paul, MN

Relationship to LMAP: LMAP grandparent

I am writing to express my strong support for the two zoning variances that Linwood Monroe Arts Plus has been granted to be able to bring both of its buildings into the twenty-first century. The major revisions to the plans that SPPS has made based on community input since the initial plan was announced in March 2016 have made it dramatically better, and the new plan will create a much better learning environment for the school's students and teachers. As someone who believes in the importance of a vibrant public education system, I hope that you will uphold both variances as they have been granted.

Sincerely,

Paula Faughender

April 13, 2017

Dear Councilmember Brendmoen and members of St. Paul City Council:

We are writing to you as constituents from Ward 5, as well as parents of a 3rd grader at Linwood Monroe Arts Plus (LMAP).

To say that LMAP is an amazing school, is an understatement. As parents, we could not have asked for a more dedicated group of teachers, staff and parents. When Principal Bass shared the improvement plan for LMAP, we were excited to see the needs of the children, parents and teachers being addressed. Because it is an arts education school with a DCD and Language Academy designation, we could see clearly how the plan responded to the needs of the populations they have been trusted to serve. This mattered to us.

This plan supports the mission of the school while advancing opportunities for children of color (71%), children with disabilities (17%) and English Language learners (38%). To deny the variances is to deny educational opportunities to the children. To attempt to separate the plight of the LMAP children and their parents from the variances, is to have a narrow, incomplete understanding of educational institutions and the relationship to the communities they serve.

For more than a year, our families have been waiting for approval of improvements to LMAP that will directly impact their children. This is too long to wait for a wheelchair bound child to be able to join her classmates on stage, for her to travel from the 3rd floor to the 1st floor just to be able to go to the only accessible bathroom at the school, too long for a new American child to wait for a break out classroom so that she can work one-on-one with a specialist on her language skills, it is just too long for a child's full potential to be put on hold. These are the consequences of this process, children end up as collateral damage. This is shameful.

As members of the St. Paul City Council, you have an opportunity to do the right thing for the children of St. Paul and for public education. As parents, we urge you to deny this appeal and give LMAP children the school they deserve. Please add this letter to the public record.

Thank you so much for your continued service to Ward 5 and our city.  
Sincerely,

Chris and Aida Martinez-Freeman  
16xx Huron St  
Saint Paul, MN 55105

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In solidarity,

Aida

Dear City Council Member,

I am writing today to ask you to oppose the two major variances requested for 1023 Osceola at this time. I believe the BZA erred in their decision and the property owner has not met the criteria to be granted the two major variances.

First of all, if you are not familiar with the property in question, please pay a visit prior to the hearing. You will see a small school property on 1/3 of a city block, nestled in a walkable residential neighborhood surrounded by single family homes, duplexes, triplexes, and modest apartment buildings.

I am fully supportive of changes being made to the property and think improvements for ADA compliance, improved heating and cooling, fixing broken lockers, making the outside more aesthetically pleasing, and a separate cafeteria are long overdue. However, the two major variance requests are not necessary for any of these improvements, and the two major variance requests fail to meet the **six criteria established by the City of St. Paul.**

Before I jump into the factual reasons why the property owner should be denied the two major variances at this time, I just want to add a personal note. I love having the school as a neighbor and it brings a smile to my face every time I hear the joyful laughs and screams of the students enjoying and using up every inch of the play space on the north side of the building on days I work from home. I also love when it is filled up on the weeknights and weekends by neighbor kids of all ages. It is a focal point of our community. We have two school-aged children who fit the demographics of many of the students at the school – our children are immigrants, English-language learners, receive special education services, are students of color, and also attend an SPPS magnet school. I see my children in all of these students, which is why on an emotional level I also oppose the current proposed expansion. The children at Linwood deserve better. They need improvements to their school building inside, and they need open play space to run, play, jump, explore. The two major variances, if approved, will shrink the contiguous open play space significantly, and replace open space with a parking lot and a tall building. This is what inequity looks like.

**The proposed major expansion is not in harmony with the neighborhood.** The school is surrounded on three sides by residential streets, and on the other side are single family homes. The school is on about 1/3 of a city block, which is in contrast to other SPPS schools like Randolph Heights, Maxfield, Adams, Galtier, Farnsworth, etc, all of which occupy an entire city block. Other schools like Saint Anthony Park, Riverview West, Hamline, Mississippi Creative Arts, Chelsea Heights and Groveland are attached or adjacent to, and share resources with, Saint Paul Recreation Centers.

The proposed major expansion would have a height of more than 47 feet at the lowest point of measurement, but will exceed 60 feet when measured from the Fairmount side of the building. There are several apartment buildings in our area, and all the buildings are much shorter than the current and proposed school expansion, and all are set back on the property. The apartment buildings across the street on Osceola are under 30 feet in height, and the tallest building, on the corner of Fairmount and Chatsworth, is about 38 feet maximum, measured to find its highest elevation point. Moreover, the proposed expansion would take the school from

27.8% lot coverage to 38.5% lot coverage, which will come at the cost of open play space for children of the school and neighborhood, and does not include the parking lot which is unusable as play space.

**What is driving the need for variances is totally within control of the applicant, SPPS.** They have made a programming decision to move more students to the campus and the major expansion is only needed this reason. They have said they will be adding about 165 students to the campus. Because SPPS has decided to make this school an arts magnet school, they say they need separate rooms for drama, music, dance, performance space, etc. Those are all decisions that are being made by the school district and are completely in their control. SPPS created a dual-campus school and have said that space needs at another school in another neighborhood is the reason why they need to shift kids and put pressure on the space needs at Linwood. They are a public entity and own many properties around the city and have the ability to purchase more. One neighbor adjacent to the school talked to them about buying their property, and the district dismissed the idea.

SPPS's other elementary schools have much more space for expansion; as noted earlier, many sit on an entire city block (the Monroe campus actually has two full city blocks of space), but the district wants to do a large expansion on the smallest school site. Also, arguably, have excess capacity to build at other locations, own a property in the West 7th neighborhood that they are trying to sell, can move schools to meet programming needs (they have done this my children's school once and will be doing so again for the 2018-19 school year), and they can buy and build new school buildings, as they are doing with a new building for the students at RiverEast, plans to build a new middle school on the east side, and recent talks of purchasing a huge property of a current arts and science magnet school just over the city boarder in Woodbury.

**I also want to point out that SPPS does not ask for a parking variance at this location, which would be supported by many in the neighborhood.** This is odd to me, because SPPS asked for one at Saint Anthony Park Elementary, and the BZA granted that in January. They say there will be fewer buses, which means the whole north side of the property along Fairmount is no longer needed during school hours to be a "Bus Only" parking lane, which means teachers and visitors have more options for on-street parking. They could also put parking spots along the alley, but opt to instead build a new parking lot. I will also note that the Adams Spanish Immersion school plans were changed by SPPS after their district council wanted less parking and more green space.

Thank you for considering my comments. Please oppose these two major variances and ask SPPS to come back with a better plan that either meets the current zoning code or requires variances that meet the six criteria established by the city to grant a variance.

Sincerely,  
Becca Pryse  
10xx Fairmount Ave

**From:** Barbara Berdahl [<mailto:advocatesforlmap@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Sunday, April 9, 2017 9:13 AM  
**To:** #CI-StPaul\_Ward3 <[Ward3@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:Ward3@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>  
**Cc:** Benner II, Jerome (CI-StPaul) <[jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>  
**Subject:** Letter of Support for LMAP Variance

From: Barbara Berdahl

Email Address:

Address: 17xx Scheffer Ave.

Relationship to LMAP: an LMAP parent, a supporter of public education in St. Paul

I am writing to express my strong support for the two zoning variances that Linwood Monroe Arts Plus has been granted to be able to bring both of its buildings into the twenty-first century. The major revisions to the plans that SPPS has made based on community input since the initial plan was announced in March 2016 have made it dramatically better, and the new plan will create a much better learning environment for the school's students and teachers. As someone who believes in the importance of a vibrant public education system, I hope that you will uphold both variances as they have been granted.

Sincerely,

Barbara Berdahl

**From:** Norah Kelly

**Sent:** Wednesday, April 5, 2017 10:34 AM

**To:** Benner II, Jerome (CI-StPaul) <[jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>

**Subject:** LMAP Zoning Variance

Dear Mr. Benner,

I am writing to support Linwood Monroe Arts Plus and the variance that they have been granted to help improve their facilities. I am a resident of St. Paul and a supporter of public education.

Thank you for your time.

Best regards,

Norah Kelly

14xx Schletti St.

St. Paul, MN 55117

**From:** From: Jane Barnard [<mailto:advocatesforlmap@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** Tuesday, April 11, 2017 4:05 PM

**To:** Benner II, Jerome (CI-StPaul) <[jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>

**Subject:** Letter of Support for LMAP Variance

From: Jane Barnard

Email Address:

Address:

Relationship to LMAP: a supporter of public education in St. Paul

I am writing to express my strong support for the two zoning variances that Linwood Monroe Arts Plus has been granted to be able to bring both of its buildings into the twenty-first century. The major revisions to the plans that SPPS has made based on community input since the initial plan was announced in March 2016 have made it dramatically better, and the new plan will create a much better learning environment for the school's students and teachers. As someone who believes in the importance of a vibrant public education system, I hope that you will uphold both variances as they have been granted.

Sincerely,  
Jane Barnard

**From:** From: Jill Johnson [<mailto:advocatesforlmap@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** Tuesday, April 11, 2017 4:05 PM

**To:** Benner II, Jerome (CI-StPaul) <[jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>

**Subject:** Letter of Support for LMAP Variance

From: Jill Johnson

Email Address:

Address: 16xx Hartford Ave 55116

Relationship to LMAP: an LMAP parent, a supporter of public education in St. Paul

I would like to thank you for your service, and am grateful for the work that you do. I am writing to express my support for the proposed upgrades to Linwood Monroe Arts Plus facilities on both campuses. The addition to the Lower campus (Linwood) building will allow the school to make a number of essential updates, such as making both buildings accessible for students with limited mobility, bringing undersized classrooms on both campuses up to size standards, and moving four-year-old pre-K students and nine-year-old fourth graders out of the middle school environment into the more appropriate environment of the elementary school. The addition will also increase the amount of available dedicated play space by over 1,000 sf and give students the dedicated place they currently do not have to play inside on bad weather days. At the Upper school (Monroe), where some classrooms are only half the size that SPPS standards call for, all classrooms will be brought up to adequate sizes. I strongly support the two zoning variances that Linwood Monroe has been granted to be able to bring both of its buildings into the twenty-first century, and appreciate the willingness of SPPS to adjust its plans by making several major revisions based on community input. As someone who believes in the importance of a vibrant public education system, I hope that you will support them, too.

Sincerely,  
Jill Johnson

**From:** From: Lyndon Shirley [<mailto:advocatesforlmap@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** Tuesday, April 11, 2017 4:05 PM

**To:** Benner II, Jerome (CI-StPaul) <[jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>

**Subject:** Letter of Support for LMAP Variance

From: Lyndon Shirley

Email Address:

Address: 11xx Lincoln Ave

Relationship to LMAP: a Summit Hill neighbor, a supporter of public education in St. Paul

I am writing to express my strong support for the two zoning variances that Linwood Monroe Arts Plus has been granted to be able to bring both of its buildings into the twenty-first century. The major revisions to the plans that SPPS has made based on community input since the initial

plan was announced in March 2016 have made it dramatically better, and the new plan will create a much better learning environment for the school's students and teachers. As someone who believes in the importance of a vibrant public education system, I hope that you will uphold both variances as they have been granted.

Sincerely,  
Lyndon Shirley

**From:** From: Krista Michaelis [<mailto:advocatesforlmap@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** Tuesday, April 11, 2017 4:05 PM

**To:** Benner II, Jerome (CI-StPaul) <[jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>

**Subject:** Letter of Support for LMAP Variance

From: Krista Michaelis

Email Address:

Address: 5xx State St. Saint Paul, MN 55107

Relationship to LMAP: an LMAP employee, a supporter of public education in St. Paul, Parent of SPS students

I would like to thank you for your service, and am grateful for the work that you do. I am writing to express my support for the proposed upgrades to Linwood Monroe Arts Plus facilities on both campuses. The addition to the Lower campus (Linwood) building will allow the school to make a number of essential updates, such as making both buildings accessible for students with limited mobility, bringing undersized classrooms on both campuses up to size standards, and moving four-year-old pre-K students and nine-year-old fourth graders out of the middle school environment into the more appropriate environment of the elementary school. The addition will also increase the amount of available dedicated play space by over 1,000 sf and give students the dedicated place they currently do not have to play inside on bad weather days. At the Upper school (Monroe), where some classrooms are only half the size that SPPS standards call for, all classrooms will be brought up to adequate sizes. I strongly support the two zoning variances that Linwood Monroe has been granted to be able to bring both of its buildings into the twenty-first century, and appreciate the willingness of SPPS to adjust its plans by making several major revisions based on community input. As someone who believes in the importance of a vibrant public education system, I hope that you will support them, too.

Sincerely,  
Krista Michaelis

**From:** From: Noah Holm [<mailto:advocatesforlmap@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** Tuesday, April 11, 2017 4:05 PM

**To:** Benner II, Jerome (CI-StPaul) <[jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>

**Subject:** Letter of Support for LMAP Variance

From: Noah Holm

Email Address:

Address: 1x Winona St W

Relationship to LMAP: a supporter of public education in St. Paul, ... oldest daughter may start at LMAP in the fall

I am writing to express my strong support for the two zoning variances that Linwood Monroe Arts Plus has been granted to be able to bring both of its buildings into the twenty-first century. The major revisions to the plans that SPPS has made based on community input since the initial

plan was announced in March 2016 have made it dramatically better, and the new plan will create a much better learning environment for the school's students and teachers. As someone who believes in the importance of a vibrant public education system, I hope that you will uphold both variances as they have been granted.

Sincerely,  
Noah Holm

**From:** From: Alina Hornfeldt [<mailto:advocatesforlmap@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** Tuesday, April 11, 2017 4:05 PM

**To:** Benner II, Jerome (CI-StPaul) <[jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>

**Subject:** Letter of Support for LMAP Variance

From: Alina Hornfeldt

Email Address:

Address: 10xx Thomas Ave W

Relationship to LMAP: an LMAP parent, a supporter of public education in St. Paul

I would like to thank you for your service, and am grateful for the work that you do. I am writing to express my support for the proposed upgrades to Linwood Monroe Arts Plus facilities on both campuses. The addition to the Lower campus (Linwood) building will allow the school to make a number of essential updates, such as making both buildings accessible for students with limited mobility, bringing undersized classrooms on both campuses up to size standards, and moving four-year-old pre-K students and nine-year-old fourth graders out of the middle school environment into the more appropriate environment of the elementary school. The addition will also increase the amount of available dedicated play space by over 1,000 sf and give students the dedicated place they currently do not have to play inside on bad weather days. At the Upper school (Monroe), where some classrooms are only half the size that SPPS standards call for, all classrooms will be brought up to adequate sizes. I strongly support the two zoning variances that Linwood Monroe has been granted to be able to bring both of its buildings into the twenty-first century, and appreciate the willingness of SPPS to adjust its plans by making several major revisions based on community input. As someone who believes in the importance of a vibrant public education system, I hope that you will support them, too.

Please do not let the classism and racism of this group of people deprive my child and many other deserving children of these improvements to their school. I know you will do the right thing and vote for the children. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,  
Alina Hornfeldt

**From:** From: Kelly Nelson [<mailto:advocatesforlmap@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** Tuesday, April 11, 2017 4:05 PM

**To:** Benner II, Jerome (CI-StPaul) <[jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>

**Subject:** Letter of Support for LMAP Variance

From: Kelly Nelson

Email Address:

Address: West Seventh Resident 55102

Relationship to LMAP: an LMAP parent, a supporter of public education in St. Paul, SPPS employee



I would like to thank you for your service, and am grateful for the work that you do. I am writing to express my support for the proposed upgrades to Linwood Monroe Arts Plus facilities on both campuses. The addition to the Lower campus (Linwood) building will allow the school to make a number of essential updates, such as making both buildings accessible for students with limited mobility, bringing undersized classrooms on both campuses up to size standards, and moving four-year-old pre-K students and nine-year-old fourth graders out of the middle school environment into the more appropriate environment of the elementary school. The addition will also increase the amount of available dedicated play space by over 1,000 sf and give students the dedicated place they currently do not have to play inside on bad weather days. At the Upper school (Monroe), where some classrooms are only half the size that SPPS standards call for, all classrooms will be brought up to adequate sizes. I strongly support the two zoning variances that Linwood Monroe has been granted to be able to bring both of its buildings into the twenty-first century, and appreciate the willingness of SPPS to adjust its plans by making several major revisions based on community input. As someone who believes in the importance of a vibrant public education system, I hope that you will support them, too.

Sincerely,  
Kelly Nelson

**From:** From: Kate Siess [<mailto:advocatesforlmap@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 11, 2017 4:05 PM  
**To:** Benner II, Jerome (CI-StPaul) <[jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>  
**Subject:** Letter of Support for LMAP Variance

From: Kate Siess

Email Address:

Address: 10xx Cleveland Ave S St. Paul MN 55116

Relationship to LMAP: a supporter of public education in St. Paul

I am writing to express my strong support for the two zoning variances that Linwood Monroe Arts Plus has been granted to be able to bring both of its buildings into the twenty-first century. The major revisions to the plans that SPPS has made based on community input since the initial plan was announced in March 2016 have made it dramatically better, and the new plan will create a much better learning environment for the school's students and teachers. As someone who believes in the importance of a vibrant public education system, I hope that you will uphold both variances as they have been granted.

I was a SPPS student. I graduated in 2010. I value all of the representatives who in the past worked hard to support students like me. Now, I hope that you will support the current SPPS students by ensuring that they have a proper place to learn and grow. Thank you for advocating for the SPPS children.

Sincerely,  
Kate Siess

**From:** From: Stephanie Hubbard [<mailto:advocatesforlmap@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 11, 2017 4:05 PM  
**To:** Benner II, Jerome (CI-StPaul) <[jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>  
**Subject:** Letter of Support for LMAP Variance  
From: Stephanie Hubbard  
Email Address:

Address: 27xx Hilo Ave N

Relationship to LMAP: an LMAP employee, a supporter of public education in St. Paul

I am writing to express my strong support for the two zoning variances that Linwood Monroe Arts Plus has been granted to be able to bring both of its buildings into the twenty-first century. The major revisions to the plans that SPPS has made based on community input since the initial plan was announced in March 2016 have made it dramatically better, and the new plan will create a much better learning environment for the school's students and teachers. As someone who believes in the importance of a vibrant public education system, I hope that you will uphold both variances as they have been granted.

Sincerely,  
Stephanie Hubbard

**From:** Eric Weispfening [<mailto:advocatesforlmap@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** Monday, April 10, 2017 6:34 PM

**To:** #CI-StPaul\_Ward2 <[Ward2@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:Ward2@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>

**Cc:** Benner II, Jerome (CI-StPaul) <[jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>

**Subject:** Letter of Support for LMAP Variance

From: Eric Weispfening

Email Address:

Address: 6xx Victoria St. S., St. Paul, MN

Relationship to LMAP: LMAP grandparent

I strongly support the two variances granted to Linwood Monroe Arts Plus to bring buildings on both of its campuses into the 21st century. As a supporter of public education in St. Paul, I encourage you to as well.

Sincerely,  
Eric Weispfening

**From:** From: Kate Ostrem [<mailto:advocatesforlmap@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** Tuesday, April 11, 2017 4:05 PM

**To:** Benner II, Jerome (CI-StPaul) <[jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>

**Subject:** Letter of Support for LMAP Variance

From: Kate Ostrem

Email Address:

Address: 18xx Princeton Ave

Relationship to LMAP: a supporter of public education in St. Paul

I am writing to express my strong support for the two zoning variances that Linwood Monroe Arts Plus has been granted to be able to bring both of its buildings into the twenty-first century. The major revisions to the plans that SPPS has made based on community input since the initial plan was announced in March 2016 have made it dramatically better, and the new plan will create a much better learning environment for the school's students and teachers. As someone who believes in the importance of a vibrant public education system, I hope that you will uphold both variances as they have been granted.

Chris, it's time for us to give the kids at Linwood Monroe Arts Plus the building they deserve. Please don't let a few loud people get in the way of doing the right thing.

Sincerely,  
Kate Ostrem

**From:** From: Josh Anderson [<mailto:advocatesforlmap@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** Tuesday, April 11, 2017 4:05 PM

**To:** Benner II, Jerome (CI-StPaul) <[jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>

**Subject:** Letter of Support for LMAP Variance

From: Josh Anderson

Email Address:

Address: 2xx Western Ave S, St Paul MN, 55102

Relationship to LMAP: an LMAP parent, a supporter of public education in St. Paul

I strongly support the two variances granted to Linwood Monroe Arts Plus to bring buildings on both of its campuses into the 21st century. As a supporter of public education in St. Paul, I encourage you to as well.

Sincerely,

Josh Anderson

**From:** From: Caley Long [<mailto:advocatesforlmap@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** Tuesday, April 11, 2017 4:05 PM

**To:** Benner II, Jerome (CI-StPaul) <[jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>

**Subject:** Letter of Support for LMAP Variance

From: Caley Long

Email Address:

Address: 4xx Hamline Ave South, Saint Paul MN 55105

Relationship to LMAP: a supporter of public education in St. Paul

I am writing to express my strong support for the two zoning variances that Linwood Monroe Arts Plus has been granted to be able to bring both of its buildings into the twenty-first century. The major revisions to the plans that SPPS has made based on community input since the initial plan was announced in March 2016 have made it dramatically better, and the new plan will create a much better learning environment for the school's students and teachers. As someone who believes in the importance of a vibrant public education system, I hope that you will uphold both variances as they have been granted.

Sincerely,

Caley Long

**From:** From: Gina McCabe [<mailto:advocatesforlmap@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** Tuesday, April 11, 2017 4:05 PM

**To:** Benner II, Jerome (CI-StPaul) <[jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>

**Subject:** Letter of Support for LMAP Variance

From: Gina McCabe

Email Address:

Address: 11xx Lincoln Ave

Relationship to LMAP: a Summit Hill neighbor, a supporter of public education in St. Paul

I strongly support the two variances granted to Linwood Monroe Arts Plus to bring buildings on both of its campuses into the 21st century. As a supporter of public education in St. Paul, I encourage you to as well.

Sincerely,

Gina McCabe

**From:** From: Sarah West [<mailto:advocatesforlmap@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** Tuesday, April 11, 2017 4:05 PM

**To:** Benner II, Jerome (CI-StPaul) <[jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>

**Subject:** Letter of Support for LMAP Variance

From: Sarah West

Email Address:

Address:

Relationship to LMAP: a Summit Hill neighbor, a supporter of public education in St. Paul

I am writing to express my strong support for the two zoning variances that Linwood Monroe Arts Plus has been granted to be able to bring both of its buildings into the twenty-first century. The major revisions to the plans that SPPS has made based on community input since the initial plan was announced in March 2016 have made it dramatically better, and the new plan will create a much better learning environment for the school's students and teachers. As someone who believes in the importance of a vibrant public education system, I hope that you will uphold both variances as they have been granted.

Sincerely,  
Sarah West

**From:** From: Sarah Lightner [<mailto:advocatesforlmap@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** Tuesday, April 11, 2017 4:05 PM

**To:** Benner II, Jerome (CI-StPaul) <[jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>

**Subject:** Letter of Support for LMAP Variance

From: Sarah Lightner

Email Address:

Address: 1xx S. Wheeler St., St. Paul, MN 55105

Relationship to LMAP: a supporter of public education in St. Paul

I would like to thank you for your service, and am grateful for the work that you do. I am writing to express my support for the proposed upgrades to Linwood Monroe Arts Plus facilities on both campuses. The addition to the Lower campus (Linwood) building will allow the school to make a number of essential updates, such as making both buildings accessible for students with limited mobility, bringing undersized classrooms on both campuses up to size standards, and moving four-year-old pre-K students and nine-year-old fourth graders out of the middle school environment into the more appropriate environment of the elementary school. The addition will also increase the amount of available dedicated play space by over 1,000 sf and give students the dedicated place they currently do not have to play inside on bad weather days. At the Upper school (Monroe), where some classrooms are only half the size that SPPS standards call for, all classrooms will be brought up to adequate sizes. I strongly support the two zoning variances that Linwood Monroe has been granted to be able to bring both of its buildings into the twenty-first century, and appreciate the willingness of SPPS to adjust its plans by making several major revisions based on community input. As someone who believes in the importance of a vibrant public education system, I hope that you will support them, too.

Thank you for your continued hard work in St. Paul!

Sincerely,  
Sarah Lightner

**From:** From: Pete gaffney [<mailto:advocatesforlmap@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 11, 2017 4:05 PM  
**To:** Benner II, Jerome (CI-StPaul) <[jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>  
**Subject:** Letter of Support for LMAP Variance

From: Pete gaffney

Email Address:

Address: 12xx Lafond Ave

Relationship to LMAP: a supporter of public education in St. Paul

I am writing to express my strong support for the two zoning variances that Linwood Monroe Arts Plus has been granted to be able to bring both of its buildings into the twenty-first century. The major revisions to the plans that SPPS has made based on community input since the initial plan was announced in March 2016 have made it dramatically better, and the new plan will create a much better learning environment for the school's students and teachers. As someone who believes in the importance of a vibrant public education system, I hope that you will uphold both variances as they have been granted.

Sincerely,

Pete gaffney

**From:** From: Mark Blegen [<mailto:advocatesforlmap@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 11, 2017 4:05 PM  
**To:** Benner II, Jerome (CI-StPaul) <[jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>  
**Subject:** Letter of Support for LMAP Variance

Address: 14xx Sargent Avenue, St. Paul

Relationship to LMAP: a supporter of public education in St. Paul

I would like to thank you for your service, and am grateful for the work that you do. I am writing to express my support for the proposed upgrades to Linwood Monroe Arts Plus facilities on both campuses. The addition to the Lower campus (Linwood) building will allow the school to make a number of essential updates, such as making both buildings accessible for students with limited mobility, bringing undersized classrooms on both campuses up to size standards, and moving four-year-old pre-K students and nine-year-old fourth graders out of the middle school environment into the more appropriate environment of the elementary school. The addition will also increase the amount of available dedicated play space by over 1,000 sf and give students the dedicated place they currently do not have to play inside on bad weather days. At the Upper school (Monroe), where some classrooms are only half the size that SPPS standards call for, all classrooms will be brought up to adequate sizes. I strongly support the two zoning variances that Linwood Monroe has been granted to be able to bring both of its buildings into the twenty-first century, and appreciate the willingness of SPPS to adjust its plans by making several major revisions based on community input. As someone who believes in the importance of a vibrant public education system, I hope that you will support them, too.

As an associate dean at St. Catherine University, I have been involved in education for over 20 years. In that time I have seen first hand the value of diversity and the powerful and positive impacts it has on a neighborhood. By allowing the LMAP expansion to proceed, after much thoughtful negotiating and process with ALL stakeholders, you will be securing not only the future of the students who attend, but for the neighbors who now vehemently oppose.

Sincerely,

Mark Blegen

**From:** From: Marta Shore [<mailto:advocatesforlmap@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 11, 2017 4:05 PM  
**To:** Benner II, Jerome (CI-StPaul) <[jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>  
**Subject:** Letter of Support for LMAP Variance

From: Marta Shore

Email Address:

Address: 6xx Warwick Street

Relationship to LMAP: a supporter of public education in St. Paul

I am writing to express my strong support for the two zoning variances that Linwood Monroe Arts Plus has been granted to be able to bring both of its buildings into the twenty-first century. The major revisions to the plans that SPPS has made based on community input since the initial plan was announced in March 2016 have made it dramatically better, and the new plan will create a much better learning environment for the school's students and teachers. As someone who believes in the importance of a vibrant public education system, I hope that you will uphold both variances as they have been granted.

My child goes to Expo Elementary, and benefits from having a public school that is accessible to all and has space to exercise and grow. Every student in St Paul should have the same benefits. Please uphold the variances and allow St Paul Public Schools to serve the students in St Paul.

Sincerely,

Marta Shore

**From:** From: Danial Davis [<mailto:advocatesforlmap@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 11, 2017 4:05 PM  
**To:** Benner II, Jerome (CI-StPaul) <[jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>  
**Subject:** Letter of Support for LMAP Variance

From: Danial Davis

Email Address:

Address: 9xx Lafond Avenue

Relationship to LMAP: a supporter of public education in St. Paul

I would like to thank you for your service, and am grateful for the work that you do. I am writing to express my support for the proposed upgrades to Linwood Monroe Arts Plus facilities on both campuses. The addition to the Lower campus (Linwood) building will allow the school to make a number of essential updates, such as making both buildings accessible for students with limited mobility, bringing undersized classrooms on both campuses up to size standards, and moving four-year-old pre-K students and nine-year-old fourth graders out of the middle school environment into the more appropriate environment of the elementary school. The addition will also increase the amount of available dedicated play space by over 1,000 sf and give students the dedicated place they currently do not have to play inside on bad weather days. At the Upper school (Monroe), where some classrooms are only half the size that SPPS standards call for, all classrooms will be brought up to adequate sizes. I strongly support the two zoning variances that Linwood Monroe has been granted to be able to bring both of its buildings into the twenty-first century, and appreciate the willingness of SPPS to adjust its plans by making several major revisions based on community input. As someone who believes in the importance of a vibrant public education system, I hope that you will support them, too.

Sincerely,

Danial Davis



**From:** From: Cleva Jobe [<mailto:advocatesforlmap@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** Tuesday, April 11, 2017 4:05 PM

**To:** Benner II, Jerome (CI-StPaul) <[jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>

**Subject:** Letter of Support for LMAP Variance

From: Cleva Jobe

Email Address:

Address: 1xx Elm Street

Relationship to LMAP: a supporter of public education in St. Paul

I would like to thank you for your service, and am grateful for the work that you do. I am writing to express my support for the proposed upgrades to Linwood Monroe Arts Plus facilities on both campuses. The addition to the Lower campus (Linwood) building will allow the school to make a number of essential updates, such as making both buildings accessible for students with limited mobility, bringing undersized classrooms on both campuses up to size standards, and moving four-year-old pre-K students and nine-year-old fourth graders out of the middle school environment into the more appropriate environment of the elementary school. The addition will also increase the amount of available dedicated play space by over 1,000 sf and give students the dedicated place they currently do not have to play inside on bad weather days. At the Upper school (Monroe), where some classrooms are only half the size that SPPS standards call for, all classrooms will be brought up to adequate sizes. I strongly support the two zoning variances that Linwood Monroe has been granted to be able to bring both of its buildings into the twenty-first century, and appreciate the willingness of SPPS to adjust its plans by making several major revisions based on community input. As someone who believes in the importance of a vibrant public education system, I hope that you will support them, too.

Sincerely,

Cleva Jobe

**From:** From: sarah milazzo [<mailto:advocatesforlmap@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** Tuesday, April 11, 2017 4:05 PM

**To:** Benner II, Jerome (CI-StPaul) <[jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>

**Subject:** Letter of Support for LMAP Variance

From: sarah milazzo

Email Address:

Address: 9xx St. Clair Ave

Relationship to LMAP: an LMAP parent, a Summit Hill neighbor, a supporter of public education in St. Paul

I would like to thank you for your service, and am grateful for the work that you do. I am writing to express my support for the proposed upgrades to Linwood Monroe Arts Plus facilities on both campuses. The addition to the Lower campus (Linwood) building will allow the school to make a number of essential updates, such as making both buildings accessible for students with limited mobility, bringing undersized classrooms on both campuses up to size standards, and moving four-year-old pre-K students and nine-year-old fourth graders out of the middle school environment into the more appropriate environment of the elementary school. The addition will also increase the amount of available dedicated play space by over 1,000 sf and give students the dedicated place they currently do not have to play inside on bad weather days. At the Upper school (Monroe), where some classrooms are only half the size that SPPS standards call for, all classrooms will be brought up to adequate sizes. I strongly support the two zoning variances that

Linwood Monroe has been granted to be able to bring both of its buildings into the twenty-first century, and appreciate the willingness of SPPS to adjust its plans by making several major revisions based on community input. As someone who believes in the importance of a vibrant public education system, I hope that you will support them, too.

Sincerely,  
sarah milazzo

**From:** From: marcus milazzo [<mailto:advocatesforlmap@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** Tuesday, April 11, 2017 4:05 PM

**To:** Benner II, Jerome (CI-StPaul) <[jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>

**Subject:** Letter of Support for LMAP Variance

From: marcus milazzo

Email Address:

Address: 9xx St. Clair

Relationship to LMAP: an LMAP parent, a Summit Hill neighbor, a supporter of public education in St. Paul

I would like to thank you for your service, and am grateful for the work that you do. I am writing to express my support for the proposed upgrades to Linwood Monroe Arts Plus facilities on both campuses. The addition to the Lower campus (Linwood) building will allow the school to make a number of essential updates, such as making both buildings accessible for students with limited mobility, bringing undersized classrooms on both campuses up to size standards, and moving four-year-old pre-K students and nine-year-old fourth graders out of the middle school environment into the more appropriate environment of the elementary school. The addition will also increase the amount of available dedicated play space by over 1,000 sf and give students the dedicated place they currently do not have to play inside on bad weather days. At the Upper school (Monroe), where some classrooms are only half the size that SPPS standards call for, all classrooms will be brought up to adequate sizes. I strongly support the two zoning variances that Linwood Monroe has been granted to be able to bring both of its buildings into the twenty-first century, and appreciate the willingness of SPPS to adjust its plans by making several major revisions based on community input. As someone who believes in the importance of a vibrant public education system, I hope that you will support them, too.

Sincerely,  
marcus milazzo

**From:** From: Robert Wangsness [<mailto:advocatesforlmap@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** Tuesday, April 11, 2017 4:05 PM

**To:** Benner II, Jerome (CI-StPaul) <[jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>

**Subject:** Letter of Support for LMAP Variance

From: Robert Wangsness

Email Address:

Address: 14xx Ashland Avenue

Relationship to LMAP: a Summit Hill neighbor, a supporter of public education in St. Paul, grandparents of students attending this school

I strongly support the two variances granted to Linwood Monroe Arts Plus to bring buildings on both of its campuses into the 21st century. As a supporter of public education in St. Paul, I encourage you to as well.



Public education is a bedrock of our United States. With the current head of the Department of Education, Betsy DeVos, and her disdain for public schooling, it is especially important to support this effort to improve our public education in our local communities.

Sincerely,  
Robert Wangsness

**From:** From: Jim Crawford [<mailto:advocatesforlmap@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 11, 2017 4:05 PM  
**To:** Benner II, Jerome (CI-StPaul) <[jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>  
**Subject:** Letter of Support for LMAP Variance

From: Jim Crawford  
Email Address:

Address: 8xx Winslow Ave

Relationship to LMAP: a supporter of public education in St. Paul, Grand parent of 3 sweet girls that attend LMAP

I would like to thank you for your service, and am grateful for the work that you do. I am writing to express my support for the proposed upgrades to Linwood Monroe Arts Plus facilities on both campuses. The addition to the Lower campus (Linwood) building will allow the school to make a number of essential updates, such as making both buildings accessible for students with limited mobility, bringing undersized classrooms on both campuses up to size standards, and moving four-year-old pre-K students and nine-year-old fourth graders out of the middle school environment into the more appropriate environment of the elementary school. The addition will also increase the amount of available dedicated play space by over 1,000 sf and give students the dedicated place they currently do not have to play inside on bad weather days. At the Upper school (Monroe), where some classrooms are only half the size that SPPS standards call for, all classrooms will be brought up to adequate sizes. I strongly support the two zoning variances that Linwood Monroe has been granted to be able to bring both of its buildings into the twenty-first century, and appreciate the willingness of SPPS to adjust its plans by making several major revisions based on community input. As someone who believes in the importance of a vibrant public education system, I hope that you will support them, too.

I am not your constituent, in that I live in Ward 2. But I feel that you are elected to represent the best interests of all of the citizens of St. Paul, especially our children. That's why I am taking the time to urge you to do the right thing and support this expansion. it's the right thing to do for our kids, for our city, for our future. Thank you!

Sincerely,  
Jim Crawford

**From:** From: Diane Wallace-Reid [<mailto:advocatesforlmap@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 11, 2017 4:05 PM  
**To:** Benner II, Jerome (CI-StPaul) <[jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>  
**Subject:** Letter of Support for LMAP Variance

From: Diane Wallace-Reid  
Email Address:

Address: 20xx Thure Ave., 55116

Relationship to LMAP: a supporter of public education in St. Paul

I would like to thank you for your service, and am grateful for the work that you do. I am writing to express my support for the proposed upgrades to Linwood Monroe Arts Plus facilities on both

campuses. The addition to the Lower campus (Linwood) building will allow the school to make a number of essential updates, such as making both buildings accessible for students with limited mobility, bringing undersized classrooms on both campuses up to size standards, and moving four-year-old pre-K students and nine-year-old fourth graders out of the middle school environment into the more appropriate environment of the elementary school. The addition will also increase the amount of available dedicated play space by over 1,000 sf and give students the dedicated place they currently do not have to play inside on bad weather days. At the Upper school (Monroe), where some classrooms are only half the size that SPPS standards call for, all classrooms will be brought up to adequate sizes. I strongly support the two zoning variances that Linwood Monroe has been granted to be able to bring both of its buildings into the twenty-first century, and appreciate the willingness of SPPS to adjust its plans by making several major revisions based on community input. As someone who believes in the importance of a vibrant public education system, I hope that you will support them, too.

Sincerely,

Diane Wallace-Reid

**From:** From: Skip Jobe [<mailto:advocatesforlmap@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** Tuesday, April 11, 2017 4:05 PM

**To:** Benner II, Jerome (CI-StPaul) <[jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>

**Subject:** Letter of Support for LMAP Variance

From: Skip Jobe

Email Address:

Address: 1xx Elm Street

Relationship to LMAP: a supporter of public education in St. Paul, volunteer at LMAP

I would like to thank you for your service, and am grateful for the work that you do. I am writing to express my support for the proposed upgrades to Linwood Monroe Arts Plus facilities on both campuses. The addition to the Lower campus (Linwood) building will allow the school to make a number of essential updates, such as making both buildings accessible for students with limited mobility, bringing undersized classrooms on both campuses up to size standards, and moving four-year-old pre-K students and nine-year-old fourth graders out of the middle school environment into the more appropriate environment of the elementary school. The addition will also increase the amount of available dedicated play space by over 1,000 sf and give students the dedicated place they currently do not have to play inside on bad weather days. At the Upper school (Monroe), where some classrooms are only half the size that SPPS standards call for, all classrooms will be brought up to adequate sizes. I strongly support the two zoning variances that Linwood Monroe has been granted to be able to bring both of its buildings into the twenty-first century, and appreciate the willingness of SPPS to adjust its plans by making several major revisions based on community input. As someone who believes in the importance of a vibrant public education system, I hope that you will support them, too.

Sincerely,

Skip Jobe

**From:** From: Kook Pyo Hong [<mailto:advocatesforlmap@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 11, 2017 4:05 PM  
**To:** Benner II, Jerome (CI-StPaul) <[jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>  
**Subject:** Letter of Support for LMAP Variance

From: Kook Pyo Hong

Email Address: [khongmn@gmail.com](mailto:khongmn@gmail.com)

Address: 6xx Snelling Avenue, South #110 St. Paul, MN 55116

Relationship to LMAP: a supporter of public education in St. Paul

I am writing to express my strong support for the two zoning variances that Linwood Monroe Arts Plus has been granted to be able to bring both of its buildings into the twenty-first century. The major revisions to the plans that SPPS has made based on community input since the initial plan was announced in March 2016 have made it dramatically better, and the new plan will create a much better learning environment for the school's students and teachers. As someone who believes in the importance of a vibrant public education system, I hope that you will uphold both variances as they have been granted.

Sincerely,

Kook Pyo Hong

**From:** From: Emily Schmidt [<mailto:advocatesforlmap@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 11, 2017 4:05 PM  
**To:** Benner II, Jerome (CI-StPaul) <[jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>  
**Subject:** Letter of Support for LMAP Variance

From: Emily Schmidt

Email Address:

Address: 15xx Ashland Ave., St. Paul

Relationship to LMAP: an LMAP parent, a Summit Hill neighbor, a supporter of public education in St. Paul

I would like to thank you for your service, and am grateful for the work that you do. I am writing to express my support for the proposed upgrades to Linwood Monroe Arts Plus facilities on both campuses. The addition to the Lower campus (Linwood) building will allow the school to make a number of essential updates, such as making both buildings accessible for students with limited mobility, bringing undersized classrooms on both campuses up to size standards, and moving four-year-old pre-K students and nine-year-old fourth graders out of the middle school environment into the more appropriate environment of the elementary school. The addition will also increase the amount of available dedicated play space by over 1,000 sf and give students the dedicated place they currently do not have to play inside on bad weather days. At the Upper school (Monroe), where some classrooms are only half the size that SPPS standards call for, all classrooms will be brought up to adequate sizes. I strongly support the two zoning variances that Linwood Monroe has been granted to be able to bring both of its buildings into the twenty-first century, and appreciate the willingness of SPPS to adjust its plans by making several major revisions based on community input. As someone who believes in the importance of a vibrant public education system, I hope that you will support them, too.

Sincerely,

Emily Schmidt

**From:** From: Rene Myers [<mailto:advocatesforlmap@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** Tuesday, April 11, 2017 4:05 PM

**To:** Benner II, Jerome (CI-StPaul) <[jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>

**Subject:** Letter of Support for LMAP Variance

From: Rene Myers

Email Address:

Address: 12xx Hubbard Avenue, St. Paul, 55104

Relationship to LMAP: a supporter of public education in St. Paul, I am both a former LMAP parent and employee. I am a huge fan of this community from both perspectives.

I would like to thank you for your service, and am grateful for the work that you do. I am writing to express my support for the proposed upgrades to Linwood Monroe Arts Plus facilities on both campuses. The addition to the Lower campus (Linwood) building will allow the school to make a number of essential updates, such as making both buildings accessible for students with limited mobility, bringing undersized classrooms on both campuses up to size standards, and moving four-year-old pre-K students and nine-year-old fourth graders out of the middle school environment into the more appropriate environment of the elementary school. The addition will also increase the amount of available dedicated play space by over 1,000 sf and give students the dedicated place they currently do not have to play inside on bad weather days. At the Upper school (Monroe), where some classrooms are only half the size that SPPS standards call for, all classrooms will be brought up to adequate sizes. I strongly support the two zoning variances that Linwood Monroe has been granted to be able to bring both of its buildings into the twenty-first century, and appreciate the willingness of SPPS to adjust its plans by making several major revisions based on community input. As someone who believes in the importance of a vibrant public education system, I hope that you will support them, too.

Sincerely,

Rene Myers

**From:** From: Andrea L. Egbert [<mailto:advocatesforlmap@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** Tuesday, April 11, 2017 4:05 PM

**To:** Benner II, Jerome (CI-StPaul) <[jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>

**Subject:** Letter of Support for LMAP Variance

From: Andrea L. Egbert

Email Address:

Address: 14xx Scheffer Avenue

Relationship to LMAP: a supporter of public education in St. Paul, an SPPS parent

I am writing to express my strong support for the two zoning variances that Linwood Monroe Arts Plus has been granted to be able to bring both of its buildings into the twenty-first century. The major revisions to the plans that SPPS has made based on community input since the initial plan was announced in March 2016 have made it dramatically better, and the new plan will create a much better learning environment for the school's students and teachers. As someone who believes in the importance of a vibrant public education system, I hope that you will uphold both variances as they have been granted.

Sincerely,

Andrea L. Egbert

**From:** From: Leslie Hong [<mailto:advocatesforlmap@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** Tuesday, April 11, 2017 4:05 PM

**To:** Benner II, Jerome (CI-StPaul) <[jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:jerome.benner.ii@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>

**Subject:** Letter of Support for LMAP Variance

From: Leslie Hong

Email Address:

Address: 6xx Snelling Ave S Unit 110

Relationship to LMAP: a supporter of public education in St. Paul, Friend of a LMAP student

I am writing to express my strong support for the two zoning variances that Linwood Monroe Arts Plus has been granted to be able to bring both of its buildings into the twenty-first century. The major revisions to the plans that SPPS has made based on community input since the initial plan was announced in March 2016 have made it dramatically better, and the new plan will create a much better learning environment for the school's students and teachers. As someone who believes in the importance of a vibrant public education system, I hope that you will uphold both variances as they have been granted.

Sincerely,

Leslie Hong

From: Ellen Tzeutschler

Sent: Friday, April 14, 2017 7:58 AM

To: #CI-StPaul\_Ward1

Subject: Linwood school expansion YES!

Dear Council Member Thao,

I'm writing to ask your support for the expansion project at the Linwood campus. I am in favor of the expansion of the building that will benefit the students of St Paul and ask you to do the same. I'm a SPPS parent and I support this project.

Sincerely,

Ellen Tzeutschler

11xx Dayton Ave 55104

Sent: Friday, April 14, 2017 11:07 AM

To: Noecker, Rebecca (CI-StPaul)

Subject: Linwood School Variance Appeal

Rebecca Noecker:

Please reverse the BZA's decision to grant the variances for Linwood School. The St. Paul School board is presenting this proposed addition to the Linwood School as a minor change and are requesting two zoning variances to allow it. However they are attempting to turn a small neighborhood school into major city school on not just a small parcel of land (1/3 of a city block) but on the smallest elementary property in the St. Paul school system. This shoehorning of a much larger school into this tight space is not good for either the school children or the neighborhood. The playground/park area fronting Fairmount Avenue is very important to both the children and the neighborhood and should not be decimated.

The additional traffic would be more than the neighborhood can manage. They are proposing to load numerous buses on two narrow side street. The parking lot which is listed now as 6 spots they are proposing to increase by very few spaces. Where are the other teachers, administrators, support staff

and parents supposed to park their cars? Clearly this is way too large a project for the space if they cannot find adequate parking on the property.

Linwood School needs updating and improving. We are all in agreement about this. It is the size of the project that is completely out of proportion with the site. In the 40 years that I have owned property at 1042 Fairmount at the corner of Oxford, the neighborhood has maintained its historic character and is now in the Historic Hill District Area. The school board should be searching for an alternate site for this much larger school while they are doing the necessary improvements to Linwood to make it ADA-compliant and updating the school.

Lastly when the St. Paul schools have experienced a drop of 1000 students in 2 years, and losses of over 2000 students are anticipated in the future, why is the St. Paul School Board planning such a large addition to Linwood School. Please reverse the BZA's decision to grant the variances for Linwood School.

Thank you for your consideration.

Irene Pruzan  
Owner  
10xx-xx Fairmount Avenue

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in support of Linwood Monroe Arts Plus as I've had the pleasure of conducting a one-week residency with over 100 of their 6th graders for the last three years. I've conducted hundreds of artist residencies in schools of all kinds and Amy Corrigan, who teaches 6th grade English, is one of the best teachers I've ever worked with. This very culturally diverse school really embraces how art and education can be intertwined to positively impact classrooms.

I am a professional photographic artist, best known for my major public art installations, such as The University Avenue Project (2010) where I installed hundred of photographs reflecting everyday life, turning the corridor into a six-mile gallery.

Best,  
Wing

Wing Young Huie  
THIRD PLACE GALLERY  
3730 Chicago Avenue S, Studio B  
Minneapolis, MN 55407  
612-817-2771



**From:** Diane Trout-Oertel

**Sent:** Sunday, April 16, 2017 1:32 PM

**To:** #CI-StPaul\_Ward2

**Cc:** #CI-StPaul\_Ward3

**Subject:** Appeal of BZA's Approval of Variances for Linwood Monroe Arts Plus Lower Campus Expansion

Dear Councilmember Noecker,

Attached are the notes I read from when I made a motion to deny the variances for this project at the BZA hearing on March 13. The comments I succeeded in making at the meeting are on the tape recording of the meeting. However, I am copying you on the attached document because I did not get a chance to voice the revised findings I had hoped put on the table. My motion did not get a second.

The substitute Chairperson who chaired the March 13 BZA meeting neglected to call for discussion following the subsequent motion to approve the variances. The vote was taken immediately without any deliberation, and I did not have a chance to present the revised findings that supported my opinion, which I feel were more in keeping with the Zoning Code than the staff findings were.

I would add that the Linwood Monroe proceedings were clouded by the same factors as Wayne Fischer's appeal which you heard at the last City Council meeting. That is, two new commissioners were brought onto the BZA and some commissioners were absent at key meetings during the process.

If you wish to further discuss any of these points, I would be happy to talk to you. My telephone number is. Thank you for taking the time to read this message. Sincerely,  
Diane Trout-Oertel

**Sent:** Friday, April 14, 2017 2:34 PM

**To:** \*CI-StPaul\_Contact-Council; #CI-StPaul\_Ward1; #CI-StPaul\_Ward2; #CI-StPaul\_Ward4; #CI-StPaul\_Ward6; #CI-StPaul\_Ward5; #CI-StPaul\_Ward7; #CI-StPaul\_Ward3

**Cc:**

**Subject:** Klass Warch Letter opposing variances for Linwood School expansion, File # ABZA 17-5

Dear Members of the St. Paul City Council:

My husband, Stephen Warch, and I submit the attached letter in support of the appeal of the BZA decision on Linwood School filed by Lynn and Val Di Euilis. For the reasons set forth in the letter, we ask that you grant the appeal and reverse the BZA decision granting the variances.

Respectfully,

Alexandra B. Klass and Stephen K. Warch

9xx Fairmount Avenue

St. Paul, MN 55105

**From:** kathy olmstead  
**Sent:** Monday, April 17, 2017 9:58 AM  
**To:** #CI-StPaul\_Ward7  
**Subject:** linwood school appeal

Hi Jane,

I am writing to ask the city council to reverse the BZA decisions to grant variances at the Linwood lower campus school site. I am fully behind making improvements at the Linwood lower campus. I think our schools and our families deserve updated classrooms, a separate gym and cafeteria an ADA compliant school and a new heating and cooling system. All of my kids attended St. Paul Public schools, in particular, my daughter Alison attended Linwood elementary. I believe in public schools. I am firmly committed to finding a win-win solution with SPPS and feel that this is a completely achievable goal.

The proposed design, requiring 2 major variances, puts a massive building on the smallest elementary school campus in the whole SPPS in a residential neighborhood of small scale but historic homes. This proposed design reduces by 40% critically needed open and green space on the north side of the school. This existing open area on the north side of the Linwood is a small precious asset to both the school and the neighborhood. Like all good things, it must be preserved, because once it is gone, it is gone forever. Council members should come tour the site and see how the scale of the proposed building would impact the open space on the north and west sides of the school.

As a trained architect and residential design professional, I know that there are many good solutions that can give our students and teachers what they need; *within the zoning ordinance parameters*. The problem seems to be that SPPS wants to increase their student population at this site, thus is asking for a too large building for the site.

As a neighbor, homeowner and resident in Saint Paul for 24 years, parent of 3 Saint Paul Public School alumni (central graduates in 2005, 2012 and 2013) and supporter of the Saint Paul Public schools, my children and I ask the city council to reverse the BZA decision to grant variances at the Linwood lower campus school site.

Thank you,  
Kathryn Olmstead

**From:** Melissa FLoyd [<mailto:advocatesforlmap@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** Monday, April 17, 2017 10:17 AM

**To:** #CI-StPaul\_Ward3

**Cc:** Benner II, Jerome (CI-StPaul)

**Subject:** Letter of Support for LMAP Variance

From: Melissa FLoyd

Email Address:

Address: 14xx Juliet Ave

Relationship to LMAP: an LMAP parent, a supporter of public education in St. Paul, Spouse of LMAP teacher

I would like to thank you for your service, and am grateful for the work that you do. I am writing to express my support for the proposed upgrades to Linwood Monroe Arts Plus facilities on both campuses. The addition to the Lower campus (Linwood) building will allow the school to make a number of essential updates, such as making both buildings accessible for students with limited mobility, bringing undersized classrooms on both campuses up to size standards, and moving four-year-old pre-K students and nine-year-old fourth graders out of the middle school environment into the more appropriate environment of the elementary school. The addition will also increase the amount of available dedicated play space by over 1,000 sf and give students the dedicated place they currently do not have to play inside on bad weather days. At the Upper school (Monroe), where some classrooms are only half the size that SPPS standards call for, all classrooms will be brought up to adequate sizes. I strongly support the two zoning variances that Linwood Monroe has been granted to be able to bring both of its buildings into the twenty-first century, and appreciate the willingness of SPPS to adjust its plans by making several major revisions based on community input. As someone who believes in the importance of a vibrant public education system, I hope that you will support them, too.

We toured several schools all over Saint Paul before deciding on applying to Linwood Monroe. We did not know a few months later that my husband would be hired to teach 4th grade at the Monroe campus following budget cuts at his former school (Wellstone Elementary). We could not be happier as we near the end of 2 years of being a member of the LMAP community. Our daughter has grown leaps and bounds with her social skills and love of the arts. This is solely based on the amazing education she has received from her classroom teachers and the arts instructors at LMAP. These kids deserve a space that represents the beautiful education they are receiving as members of the SPPS family. Our teachers and support staff deserve a space that allows them to provide healthy learning environments. Please support the variances needed to move this project forward. Thank you!!

Sincerely,  
Melissa FLoyd

**From:** Tom Basgen [<mailto:advocatesforlmap@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** Monday, April 17, 2017 12:02 PM

**To:** #CI-StPaul\_Ward3

**Cc:** Benner II, Jerome (CI-StPaul)

**Subject:** Letter of Support for LMAP Variance

From: Tom Basgen

Email Address:

Address: 18xx Munster Ave

Relationship to LMAP: a supporter of public education in St. Paul

I strongly support the two variances granted to Linwood Monroe Arts Plus to bring buildings on both of its campuses into the 21st century. As a supporter of public education in St. Paul, I encourage you to as well.

It's schools Tolbert. This is not a hard choice. Let's get a win on the board here.

Sincerely,  
Tom Basgen

**From:** Jeff Zaayer [<mailto:advocatesforlmap@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** Monday, April 17, 2017 1:31 PM

**To:** #CI-StPaul\_Ward3

**Cc:** Benner II, Jerome (CI-StPaul)

**Subject:** Letter of Support for LMAP Variance

From: Jeff Zaayer

Email Address:

Address: 17xx Saunders Ave

Relationship to LMAP: a supporter of public education in St. Paul

I would like to thank you for your service, and am grateful for the work that you do. I am writing to express my support for the proposed upgrades to Linwood Monroe Arts Plus facilities on both campuses. The addition to the Lower campus (Linwood) building will allow the school to make a number of essential updates, such as making both buildings accessible for students with limited mobility, bringing undersized classrooms on both campuses up to size standards, and moving four-year-old pre-K students and nine-year-old fourth graders out of the middle school environment into the more appropriate environment of the elementary school. The addition will also increase the amount of available dedicated play space by over 1,000 sf and give students the dedicated place they currently do not have to play inside on bad weather days. At the Upper school (Monroe), where some classrooms are only half the size that SPPS standards call for, all classrooms will be brought up to adequate sizes. I strongly support the two zoning variances that Linwood Monroe has been granted to be able to bring both of its buildings into the twenty-first century, and appreciate the willingness of SPPS to adjust its plans by making several major revisions based on community input. As someone who believes in the importance of a vibrant public education system, I hope that you will support them, too.

Sincerely,

Jeff Zaayer

**From:** Kateri Routh [<mailto:advocatesforlmap@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** Monday, April 17, 2017 2:02 PM

**To:** #CI-StPaul\_Ward3

**Cc:** Benner II, Jerome (CI-StPaul)

**Subject:** Letter of Support for LMAP Variance

From: Kateri Routh

Email Address:

Address: 20xx Stanford Ave.

Relationship to LMAP: a supporter of public education in St. Paul

I strongly support the two variances granted to Linwood Monroe Arts Plus to bring buildings on both of its campuses into the 21st century. As a supporter of public education in St. Paul, I encourage you to as well.

Sincerely,

Kateri Routh

City Council Members:

**Please deny the variance for the Linwood School at the hearing this Wednesday.** The neighbors who oppose the variance feel deeply that the children at the Linwood School deserve upgraded facilities. We are parents, grandparents, passionate supporters of those who are underprivileged and who have no

voice in our system. We march for civil rights and human rights. We want to see the school improved, but the plan proposed by SPPS is truly over-sized and does not balance the community needs with their desire to increase enrollment on the smallest school lot in the district.

The BZA, in this case, did not impartially evaluate the circumstances and **made errors in applying the zoning code**, in particular that "the variance must not alter the essential character of the surrounding area" (a variance of 50% over the height restrictions in the zoning code creates a massive wall adjacent to the property line and destroys 40% of the only decent green/play space for kids and families in the area) and the "practical difficulties" requirement (SPPS is deciding to move BOTH 4th and Pre-K grades to this small site).

If you have heard anything about the process Saint Paul Public Schools initiated with their application for two variances on the smallest school property in the SPPS district, there is passion on both sides. The neighbors have been accused by directly by SPPS administrators and school parents of being overly-privileged, anti-minority, and anti-children. We want to heal and come together as a community. **We are pro-kids and pro-Linwood School.**

**We need the City Council to deny the variance and serve as the body that will enable both sides to come together to a straightforward solution that will be a win-win and benefit the long term good of the kids in the neighborhood and at Linwood School.**

Sincerely,  
Jason Goldberg  
10xx Fairmount

Dear Council Member

I'm writing in opposition to the proposed Linwood Elementary Expansion. The proposed expansion of the Linwood Elementary school is extreme and is way outside the local code. SPPS proposal will double the size of the existing school essentially building a second school while marginalizing the use of the existing structure. The building height is not just a small percent outside the variance but an almost full 2/3 taller than the regulations and with the topology of the lot will rise roughly 30 feet above the homes across Fairmount.

- It is important that the BZA uphold the codes which are in place to protect the city neighborhoods from commercial, public and even our own over ambitions. In this instance it was a failure to let a build this far outside the codes to be approved. SPPS with its larger organization and money decided early on to bypass neighborhood engagement and has aggressively used its organization and size to suppress, insult and over power the neighbor's voice.

- While a school can be an asset to the neighborhood, it can also have negatively impact. The changes being proposed on this small (1.8 acres) lot will have a negative impact to property owners and property values. Additionally, with such a small lot this school can never be built to parity with other district schools that typically take up an entire block and have over 5 acres.

- The shade study shows our home will be in the shadow of the building in the afternoon 3 month of the year. These are the coldest months of the year when we most want the sunlight and will increase the cost for us to heat our homes.

- Building of this size and lot coverage will increase/produce a heat island in summer increasing the cost to cool our homes in summer

- Proposed height along with the raised lot will create a building that will fly roughly 30 feet above the surrounding homes which is 40 feet higher than the typical 2nd story window if you consider the for majority of homes the top 10 feet are sloped roof. This is not just large, it is massively out of size with the surrounding buildings.

- This is not an issue of race and inequality as is being pushed in social media. Saying no to this proposed build is not to say no to an expansion and improvement to Linwood School, just this version. The neighborhood is in support of improvements to the school that fit the size and nature of the lot and would welcome leadership from the City or SPPS to create a school that fits the needs while keeping with the nature of the community.

Thank you and I hope the council gives serious consideration to the impact a building of this mass will have to the neighborhood and its residence.

Ken Schumann  
10xx Fairmount Ave  
St. Paul, MN 55105

The City Council,

As a parent to 2 elementary aged boys that attend a SPPS, I am fully behind making improvements at the Linwood Lower Campus. The kids deserve updated classrooms, a separate gym and cafeteria, an ADA-compliant school, and a new heating/cooling system. The proposed design reduces by 40% a critically needed open and green space on the north side of the school. The children that attend this school for generations to come, will be affected by the loss of the north side open space. Please reverse the BZA's decision to grant the variances.

The problem is not about updating the school- the problem is about expanding the school: SPPS has decided to bring in 3 Pre-K and 3 Fourth Grade classes, or about 135-195 kids, to the lower campus of Linwood Monroe Arts Plus, which has the smallest acreage of any SPPS elementary school.

The open space is already the smallest of all SPPS elementary schools - decreasing this space to build a new expansion only exacerbates existing inequities. For example, the neighborhood school for the Linwood neighbors is Randolph Heights. To compare the inequity: Randolph Heights' 469 students currently have approximately 11,600 sq. ft. of wood chipped playground space, 10,400 sq. ft. of hard court space, 38,700 sq. ft. of open field space, and 46,000 sq. ft. of lawn - for a total of 106,700sq. ft. The proposed 435-495 LMAP students will have approximately 9,200 sq. ft. of wood chipped playground space/s, 2,000 sq. ft. of hard court space, 8,200 sq. ft. of open field space, and 3,000 sq. ft. of lawn that totals 22,400sq. ft. Think that through- about the same amount of kids, but LMAP kids get about 20% of what the Randolph Heights kids get. When the children get separated from their friends in later grades, there will not be enough outdoor play space for them to reunite during recess. In addition, after the proposed massive building is constructed, what is left of the main open space will be in perpetual shade during the school year. No direct sunshine on the school kids during long Minnesota winters.



There are other flaws, too. Currently SPPS Pre-K is only a half-day program. Which means per class, 20 students in the morning and 20 students in the afternoon. How do these 120 matriculate into just 75 Kindergarten spaces? SPPS must trust that a large majority of these Pre-K students would attend another elementary school. Which begs the question: why are we jamming all these kids into this small campus, when acres of space exist at other locations that these families will shift to after one year anyway?

Starting around 3:40 pm, a school bus is parked up to the stop sign on Oxford Street until 4:10 pm. This is a safety concern for our neighborhood. I have been witness to cars not stopping because they do not see the sign. Also, parents of students at LMAP park their cars in front of crosswalks, our alleys, driveways, and stop signs. With the increase of student population, this will exacerbate this problem. I have had more than my fair share of conversations with both Principal and Vice Principal of LMAP about this issue but it has not been alleviated.

There must be another design that would not have a 54' tall building 9' from the sidewalk. It will feel like a 7' tall co-worker hovering over you while you are sitting at your desk. Or that oppressive feeling while driving north to the U off of the I95 Huron Exit. This isn't an inner city neighborhood. The majority of our homes are less than 30' at the highest roof peak and our homes are set back from the sidewalk by at least 20'.

Families of all races, creeds, income status, and ages live in this neighborhood. When school is not in session, this open green space is our communal play space. As of the last census, our neighborhood has 1,388 children under the age of 18 living in it. This number does not include our neighbors that care for their grandchildren. Nor the more than handful of neighbors who use the open space to run their very well behaved dogs. It doesn't include the bird lover guys that sit out in the field at dusk to watch the birds in the towers. I am sure all of us have seen this green space used for more than just the student population outside of school hours/days. Please reverse the BZA's decision to grant the variances.

Thank you,

Shayne Blacksborg  
10xx Fairmount Ave

I am writing in regards to the disappointing appeal to overturn the Board of Zoning Appeals decision to all improvements to the Linwood Campus of Linwood Monroe Arts Plus (1023 Osceola). I fully support the proposed upgrades to Linwood Monroe Arts Plus facilities on both campuses and hope that you will, too.

I am a 20 year veteran teacher at the school teaching across both campuses. My husband and I also send our two children to Linwood Monroe Arts Plus. We have one child at each campus. Due to my unique role as a teacher and parent in the school, I fully understand the needs of the community.

We are an arts infused program supporting supporting all students. Our population includes a Language Academy Program for new arrivals to our country, as well as a large Developmental and Cognitive Delay Program. With unique programming comes unique need. As a privileged parent in this community, I need to speak up for members of my community who do not have a

voice: Those learning English and those with developmental delays. Linwood Monroe Arts Plus students deserve a 21st century facility. The school community needs:

- Right size classrooms to meet the standards of MDE guidelines.
- Breakout rooms to meet the needs of our many special learners.
- Separate cafeteria so that student work in and through the arts can be shared and students have available physical education space in a separate gym/auditorium.
- Updated HVAC: students currently suffer from extreme heat and cold due to insufficient mechanicals in the buildings.
- Developmentally appropriate separation of students by grade level: Ideally Linwood Campus would be PreK-5 and Monroe Campus 6-8. I understand that compromise is needed due to space constraints, so I am willing to accept PreK-4 together at Linwood even though I do not believe this is best for elementary students in grade 5.
- Updated use of existing footprint at Monroe Campus: A centrally located elevator will increase accessibility for our community.
- Handicap accessible bathrooms, gym and performance spaces. It is negligible that these are not already in place.
- Increased and improved play space: Indoor recess in a gym during lunchtimes is a necessity during inclement and extreme weather in Minnesota. The larger community will also benefit from improved outdoor play space.

It is beyond comprehension that anyone could argue against the needed renovation. I happily invite you to our school to see for yourself how the renovations are needed. I reiterate my support for the renovation across both campuses of Linwood Monroe Arts Plus.

Thank you in advance for your support of the children of Saint Paul Public Schools and Linwood Monroe Arts Plus!

Kim Kroetsch  
Vocal Music Specialist K-8  
Parent of students in grades 1 & 4  
Linwood Monroe Arts Plus

St Paul Council Members,

My name is David McManus, my wife, Kathleen and I have lived at 1004 Fairmount Ave in St Paul since 1980.

We are writing you today to ask that you reverse the BZA's approval for the two variances for Linwood School. We are certainly in favor of improvements to make the school a better facility. It does however seem the school has no good reason to exceed existing building codes for height and lot coverage other than they want to conform to a Master Facilities Plan that they have adopted and that they could amend.

Thank You for your consideration of the issues surrounding this appeal.

David and Kathy McManus  
10xx Fairmount Ave.  
St Paul MN 55105

I am a Linwood School neighbor and I am asking that the zoning variances granted to the St. Paul Public Schools regarding this property be reversed.

No doubt the school needs many improvements. Those improvements should be made. The need for the massive size of what is proposed hinges on programming decisions made by the school district, on a site that is too small to accommodate them.

I believe the Board of Zoning Appeals made an error in approving these variances and ask that you enforce the City zoning code.

Sara Stedman

10xx Fairmount Avenue  
St. Paul, MN 55105

Dear City Council Members,

Our family lives at 1061 Goodrich Ave in Saint Paul. We're in favor of changes to make the Linwood Lower School have updated classrooms, be ADA compliant, and other improvements that don't require the dramatic reduction of open space on the north side of the school.

Thank you for your consideration,

Linda Salonek

Dear City Council Members,

I am writing to you today to ask you to reverse the BZA's decision to grant the variances for the Linwood school expansion.

My wife and I have been completely for the kids. We are fully behind making improvement to the Linwood Lower school campus. The kids deserve the classrooms and school being renovated and updated to ADA standards, building a cafeteria, a separate Gym, updated heating and cooling systems. However their current plan is still too big and way too tall for the lot size.

We have lived across the street from Linwood school at 1037 Fairmount Ave for 30+ years and the neighborhood children, school children, myself, wife, daughters and now my granddaughters have enjoyed the playground and ball field immensely.

The proposed expansion will cut the green space / playground by 50%.

The children in the neighborhood and at the school will no longer have a ball field on which to play baseball, softball, and soccer. (The proposed EAU Soccer field is a legal field for up to 2nd graders) The expansion will also disrupt the established harmony and essential character of our neighborhood. It will also directly impact our direct and indirect sun light, especially during the winter months. With only a 9 foot set back on the west side and a building height of 50 to 55 feet on the north and west walls the houses to the north and west will be in shade 40 to 50% of the day during the winter months.

Let me make this clear. I am totally in favor of Linwood school lower campus remodeling to meeting ADA standards, expanding to give the kids a separate gym, cafeteria and essential learning environment, however I am against this large of an expansion for the following reasons:

1. The SHA sent their recommendations to the BZA to deny the Variances with an 11 to 1 vote because the Proposed expansion plans did not meet 4 of the six requirements of the BZA for a variance to be granted.

2. The current school's foot print is 23,332 square feet or 28% of the existing lot. With the proposed expansion increasing the foot print to 32,109 square feet or 39.5% of the lot. Code is a max of 28,451 square feet or 35% of the lot which is a variance of 3,658 square feet or 4.5%.

Referring to the second request ( This is the Largest point) regarding the building's height, code currently is 30 feet. The proposal wants to match the existing ( too tall) 47 feet on the south side of the building. However they are not allowing for the slope of the lot to the north which you can see on their side drawing of about 8 to 10+ feet. This would raise the south side of the school to 57+ feet or a 90% increase above current code.

This project exceeds the reasonable height expansion on a very small lot ( the smallest elementary school lot in the whole SPPS school system) and is way out of character of the existing building and neighborhood.

3. No other site was considered. The current Linwood school site consists of 1/3 of a city block while their secondary school, Monroe sits on a 2 city block lot and occupies less than 40% of the space.

4. The proposal seeks to increase the Linwood student population from 300 to 450. This will create an even greater problem with traffic congestion on our narrow streets.

5. The price tag is too high! 24+ Million!! With current enrollment going down in all public schools and Monroe not being close to capacity.

6 The existing open space/playground to the north of the school will be reduced by 50+%. Children need a playground to run, play baseball, softball and socialize.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Lloyd G Fjare

Dear St. Paul City Council Elected Officials,

I am writing to ask you to consider reversing the decision of the BZA to grant the Saint Paul Public Schools (SPPS) the variances to add onto Linwood School as proposed. My family and I live at 1025 Fairmount Ave, though my rationale for writing this letter is beyond the concerned neighbor. I also work in public education. Having been a teacher, and school principal for nearly 15 years before coming to the University of Minnesota where I train and develop school principals and district administrators, I have serious concerns about what I believe is the district's lack of reliable information and sound rationale in making this request.

As I am sure you have read recently in both the St Paul Pioneer Press and the Minneapolis Star Tribune, SPPS have an overall declining enrollment. As a parent of a St Paul Central student who went to Ramsey, I am no stranger to the fact that this is because of the community's exodus from SPPS as their children enter middle school. This makes Linwood a popular choice for parents - if they can get their students in - because it is not a traditional middle school. The problem with this notion is that while Linwood is full, there are many schools in Saint Paul that are not. Therefore the overall capacity of the district is far from being met. Amid an over \$20

million dollar budget deficit (I understand that capitol dollars are not general operating dollars, though they could be used for other school improvements at Linwood and across the city) this does not look to be a good use of the taxpayer's dollars. I use the word "look" intentionally because unfortunately right now the district does not "look" good to taxpayers and voters: budget crisis, declining academic performance, schools where safety is questionable are just a few of the concerns I hear taxpayers voicing. These taxpayers are the ones the district will need to vote to sustain an operating referendum, without which the SPPS would become devastated, placing us in comparison to places like Detroit. While these issues do not technically fall under the control of the city council, the city council should ultimately want the school district to be strong and viable. Endorsing decisions by the school district that are based on inaccurate enrollment projections amid a budget crisis is not in the best interest of the long-term health of the district.

I absolutely believe that a scaled back version of the project at Linwood should be approved. The building must be ADA compliant, a new lunchroom is desperately needed and the HVAC system should certainly be upgraded. Though the desire of the fourth grade teachers to be housed with the lower school teachers for collaboration (as told to me by Chief Operating Officer Jackie Turner) is a luxury, not a necessity, and certainly not supported by research. (Research supports contiguous K-8 buildings as the best configuration for student outcomes; Linwood already violates this with the two campuses.)

I absolutely believe in the need to support SPPS financially and otherwise. Though I also know in the current financial and political climate where those who can afford to do so are taking their kids out of SPPS at alarming rates, that we need to scrutinize decisions and ask the difficult questions of our school district as a community. Asking these questions should not be seen as combative or not supportive, in fact the opposite is true, we should be asking these questions for the long-term health of our district and our community. I would urge you to ask the school district and expect concrete and serious answers to the following questions before approving the variances:

1. What parts of this plan must be completed because they are required to be compliant with state and federal regulations?
2. Specifically, where do the dollars for this project come from (i.e. a voter approved levy), and if not used, will they return to taxpayers and/or can you identify where they will be used?

I want to thank you for taking the time to read not only my letter, but all of the communication you are likely getting on this topic. I want to end by saying that if I thought for one moment that this expansion would improve enrollment or academic outcomes for the Saint Paul Public Schools, I would part from my neighbors and support the proposal. However, my fairly deep knowledge of school finance and educational research lead me to believe it is the right time for the city council to ask the district serious questions for the long-term health of the school district and Saint Paul.

Katie Pikel  
10xx Fairmount Ave

Dear city council members,

I am writing to ask you to reverse the BZA's decision to grant the variances.

My family and I live right next door to the Linwood school at 1023 Osceola. The proposed addition to the school, which requires height and lot coverage variances, will result in a large, out-of-scale building in our residential neighborhood. The open, green space on the north side of the school will be decreased by approximately 40%. This is the area where the students and neighborhood children have space to run, play soccer, play softball, fly kites, and build lots of snowmen and giant snowballs (a commonly seen occurrence after a big snowfall). This drastic reduction of open space will mean these things won't be able to occur there. There is hardly room for the kids to play soccer in the current field size as it is, yet they are out there doing just that most days. Despite the current small size of the open space on the north side, it is a well used and well loved amenity for the students and the neighborhood. If the Council members are not familiar with the site, please come and tour the site to see how the proposed expansion would affect the north side open space and the surrounding neighborhood before making such an important decision.

The major variances were requested by the SPPS so additional grades can be moved to the site, and it is this increased population that requires the out-of-scale addition. By moving additional grades to the school, beyond what the school site can accommodate, it does not meet the zoning criteria, especially "The plight of the landowner is due to circumstances unique to the property not created by the landowner." The site isn't the problem. The "plight" of SPPS has been created by SPPS, rather than it being a problem with the site.

I support upgrades to the school, like updated classrooms, making it ADA-compliant, etc. for the population size (K-3rd) currently using the Linwood school. All of these updates can be performed within the existing building and with a small addition to the school, that doesn't require variances, so more of this much needed north side, green open space for the students and the neighborhood children can be preserved. As the city code criteria for the variances have not been met, I ask that you reject the variances. We would welcome the opportunity to work with SPPS to create a plan that will meet the needs of the students and the neighborhood. A plan where everyone will win.

Thank you,  
Brian Uhlhorn  
10xx Fairmount Avenue

Dear Council Members,

Thank you for your consideration to appeal the BZA variance approval for the addition on to the Linwood Monroe Arts elementary school building at 1023 Osceola Avenue. This appeal is scheduled for review at the April 19 meeting of the Council.

- I stand in full support of Linwood's improvements of updated classrooms, a separate gym and cafeteria, an ADA-compliant school, and a new heating/cooling system. Linwood school is a vibrant part of our community, and I want it to continue to thrive. However, I believe that SPPS and the neighbors still have time to sit down and come to a solution that will better benefit the students of the school, without compromising valuable playground and open space so widely

used by the students during the school year, and by the community on the weekends, evenings and summers.

- 50% of the Summit Hill community is comprised of renters. This land is not only critical to the developmental well-being of the school children, it is also the de facto congregation space of the community. It is where neighborhood children build relationships in the evenings. It is where Linwood school children weave their imagination without regard to noise or mess often restricted in a classroom. There is a different mental and emotional space that opens when a first grader explores a field in winter. Diminishing outdoor space means less large-scale play learning opportunities. Several times a winter I observe happy Linwood school children rolling giant snowballs across an open field unencumbered. The current revised plan does not give our young people room to do these things. This cannot be done on playground equipment.

- Please, consider that the success of a school requires the commitment of quality educators, updated buildings, but also the over-looked hidden classroom of green play space. I sincerely ask the council to reflect on what is lost if the building expands beyond current law requires. Outdoor green space is a classroom unto itself. The success of our children both in the school and in the community does not just happen within a building; it is hinged on providing exceptional open space too.

Thank you so much for your work and consideration.

Cynthia Truitt Lynch  
1011 Fairmount Ave.

Dear Council Members,

Thank you for your serious consideration of the appeal of Lynn and Val Di Euliis to the decision of Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) approving a variance request to construct an addition on to the Linwood Monroe Arts elementary school building at 1023 Osceola Avenue. This appeal is scheduled for review at the April 19 meeting of the Council.

I am strongly opposed to the Linwood variance and am appealing to you to do what the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) failed to do: uphold the laws of the City of St. Paul. While I have sympathy for why the BZA did not uphold the law, the fact remains that they did not do so. Likewise, I have sympathy for why it will be difficult for you to uphold the law, yet you have an obligation to do so.

Upholding the law will be difficult because of the “optics” of the Linwood expansion project. You will be reviewing a building project whose goals are to provide the most effective learning environment for the children of St. Paul, and specifically the children of the Linwood A+ Arts Program. This is a laudable goal, and of course it is in the best interest of all citizens that our young people receive an excellent education. You will be faced with descriptions from the teachers and parents of the Linwood Lower School of the daily hardships faced by students



with disabilities. These stories are absolutely compelling and heartbreaking, and the St. Paul School System should be chastised for being long overdue in addressing the physical space for these students. You may also be tempted to succumb to the strategy of the proponents of the project, namely to marginalize the position of the opponents because they are less racially diverse and more affluent than the proponents of the project. This strategy on the part of the opponents has concerned me deeply as it represents the worst of politics – full of rhetoric and personal attack, rather than a meaningful and factual approach on how to meet the needs of the community.

But although you have been presented with a proposal from the St. Paul Public School System that has significant merit, it simply does not meet the law. I urge you to require that the St. Paul Public School System demonstrate point by point how their project meets the variance code. Somehow, the burden of proof of the applicants (for the variance) to show how their project **does** meet the requirements for the two major variances has shifted to the opponents to show how the project **does not** meet the requirements for the variances. The BZA process allowed the applicants and proponents to describe their goals for the project without having to stipulate how it even meets the variance code! But, in 30% of that time, the opponents, in no more than 90-second chunks, were expected to provide a cogent rebuttal of the conditions of the variance.

But, the conditions of the variance are not met. Not one of the six conditions is met. Most notably:

A. NOT MET: “The variance is in harmony with the general purposes of the zoning code.” The variances do not promote and protect the aesthetics and general welfare of the community as required by § 60.103(a). The proposed design puts a massive building on the smallest elementary school campus in the St. Paul School System. I urge you to come see the property for yourself and visualize the impact of the proposed construction. The aesthetics, size, scale, and siting of the proposed building are inappropriate to the historic character of our neighborhood. But more importantly, the general welfare of the community is harmed by the essential elimination of the only existing green space between Dale, Lexington, Grand and St. Clair. The current green space is a highly utilized, important neighborhood (and Linwood school!) asset, and is the only place children can gather to kick around a ball without having to cross a major road. There is no question that if the Linwood School expands per the current building proposal, neighborhood families will spend less time outdoors, less time exercising, and less time building friendships and community with each other.

B. NOT MET: “The plight of the landowner is due to circumstances unique to the property not created by the landowner.”

The St. Paul School System has created its own plight by attempting to increase their building’s population, program, and addition height and size beyond what the property will allow. This is a discretionary change by the St. Paul School System, and many reasonable programming and building alternatives exist. During the BZA meeting, the St. Paul School System was asked what they expected the usage of the Linwood Campus would be ten years from now. The applicant actually laughed and said that the BZA’s crystal ball was as good as his, and acknowledged that the school has changed its mission and use many times in its history and is likely to do so in the future. To the neighbors of this property, this is far from a laughing matter. We will live with this inappropriate, oversized structure forever. We will experience the loss of the Linwood green

space forever. And we will experience these losses in the long term because of programming decision being made in the short term.

You may ask why the staff report and the BZA determined that the variances met the condition of the code. Given that the data simply do not support these conclusions, we can only assume that they have succumbed to the considerable political pressures of the situation. But as our lawmakers, you cannot do the same. It is critical that you uphold the law in just these situations. Because the Zoning Code is there to protect against these pressures, to protect against short-term goals versus long-term goals, and to protect against a very human desire to side with an apparent “underdog” even when it is not supported by the law.

So, I entreat you to fulfill your responsibility to uphold the law, so that the City of St. Paul does not foolishly give up the community benefit that results from constructing properties within the Zoning Code. I believe that a balance can be struck between the needs of the students and faculty at the Linwood School and the neighborhood stakeholders of this property. I entreat you to send the St. Paul School System back to the drawing board.

Thanks for your consideration of the filed appeal.

Cheri Kedrowski  
10xx Goodrich Ave

Dear City Council Members,

Our family lives at 10xx Goodrich. We’re in favor of the changes to make the school have updated classrooms, be ADA compliant, and other improvements that don’t require the dramatic reduction of open space on the north side of the school.

Thanks for your consideration,  
Tom and Linda Salonek

Dear Council Member Noecker, Saint Paul City Council and Mayor Coleman,

I am a Lincoln Avenue resident who lives four blocks from Linwood school, and I strongly support the school's expansion plans. A few of my neighbors have expressed reservations. While I understand their concerns, and I initially shared their particular concern regarding open space, I believe the district's current plan addresses many of the earlier shortcomings, including: there is actually an increase in usable open space, the height of the proposed addition is no higher than similar buildings in the area, and the district has a plan to optimize bus flow to minimize traffic.

In addition to the positive changes the district has made in the plans, the expansion deserves support for what Linwood represents to the Summit Hill and St. Paul Community. In Linwood, we have a diverse student body supported by a talented and committed group of teachers and administrators that is excelling. Linwood is delivering on the goals we all have for public education, and in this period when public schools are under enormous pressure, when we have a school that serves as a model for others we must nurture and uphold that success.

Some of my neighbors suggest reallocating students to relieve the burden at Linwood. This idea fails to appreciate the uniqueness of Linwood, that its strength is due to its diversity and the culture its students, teachers and administrators have created. This positive ecosystem can not simply be uprooted and replanted with an expectation of similar results, as surely many students and teachers who support the success will not move en masse.

My wife and I moved to St. Paul five years ago from outside the state in part for the schools. My wife and I were fortunate in that we had options where to live. Many of my co-workers suggested we live in Edina, Wayzata, or Southwest Minneapolis, where they lived. We desired a more diverse but supportive learning environment, in a public school, for my two children, currently ages 8 and 11. We couldn't be happier with our choice. While the Saint Paul district has its challenges similar to many other large, urban districts, the level of teaching and engagement we have experienced has been first rate. I strongly feel the academic rigor our children have received and overall advancement they have obtained has been on par with with the strongest public school and privates schools in the metro area. Linwood is a testament to this success, and I urge you to support the needs for the campus to continue to excel in serving its existing community.

Ryan Willemsen

Dear City Council Members,

As a close neighbor to the Linwood school at 1023 Osceola, I am concerned about the out-of-scale addition that SPPS has planned for the school. Many of us in the neighborhood have spent a lot of time researching the zoning codes in Saint Paul to understand whether the addition planned to Linwood meets all of the criteria necessary to be granted variances. The reasons as to why the criteria have not been met have been discussed in detail in the appeal, so I won't go into that here. Instead, I would like to relate some information about other SPPS schools and let you know of the great importance that the green, open space on the north side of the school has to the students and the surrounding neighborhood.

When the neighbors (over a year ago) first received, out of the blue, the post card in the mail notifying us that major variances were requested to build a massive addition to our neighborhood school, we started to collect information about the other SPPS school sites. We compared their buildings, acres the schools were built on, and student populations per school. We calculated the outdoor open play space for each school and were distressed to see how little outdoor open space the Linwood students and neighborhood already had in comparison to all other SPPS schools. It was easiest for us to see the differences in outdoor play space by actually visiting a variety of SPPS sites and many of us have taken the time to do this.

In order to fully understand the issue, we feel it is important for the council members to have visited and become familiar with the Linwood site and other SPPS schools. It would be greatly appreciated if you could visit some nearby school sites (like Randolph Heights, Obama, JJ Hill, Groveland) and really look at them. Note how the schools are situated on at least one entire block. Look at the heights of the schools and their setbacks and how the school buildings lack close neighbors. Then note how much outside play space and green space these schools and neighborhoods have. These open play spaces are important amenities for the children and neighborhoods. Then, please tour the Linwood site at 1023

Osceola. Notice how the Linwood school site is approximately 1/3 of a block and is the smallest SPPS site. The entire site is only 1.82 acres which is about the same size as 13 small house lots, compared to 3.53 acres at JJ Hill (25 small house lots). See how the school is situated directly next door to many homes and how the parking lot and back of the school share the alley space with neighbors. Notice that the current school is set back a reasonable number of feet from the sidewalk on Oxford, but how that will be greatly reduced with the planned addition and how this will impact the neighbors on Oxford. Neighbors who now look out on children playing in the green, open space to the north side of the school will face a large wall if this outsized addition is built.

After comparing the Linwood School site to any other SPPS school it will become obvious how the students and the neighborhood already have much less open play space than other schools and their surrounding neighborhoods. Yet, this north side play space is a greatly cherished space for students and neighborhood children despite its already small size. Reducing this open space on the north side of the school and adding a large building puts the students and neighborhood at a disadvantage.

We are fully behind making the needed improvements to the school, like a separate gym and cafeteria, ADA-compliant school, etc. But, the current proposed design requiring two major variances that don't meet zoning criteria and which would put a massive building on the smallest SPPS elementary school campus is not the right solution. We believe that if SPPS would work with the neighbors, we can find a solution together that satisfies everyone.

Thank you,

Melissa Nonnemacher  
10xx Fairmount Ave

Dear Council Members,

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter.

I am a resident of the neighborhood that will be effected by your decision on whether or not to reverse the variances for Linwood School. I live ½ block west of the school at 1058 Fairmount Avenue. I have lived at this address since 1993.

I first wish to emphasize that I am fully behind improving the school for the children and staff. I've gone to meetings inside the school that concern this issue, and have seen that there are very real needs that should be addressed. The school should be made 100% ADA compliant / handicap accessible, be expanded in a reasonable way to allow for more space to include a cafeteria separate from the gym and improve the heating and cooling system for a better learning environment. I am also, (as are my neighbors), in favor of some reasonable expansion of the classrooms at this location. I enjoy seeing the children coming and going from the school, and the sounds of them playing outside at recess.

The purposed design that requires these major variances would expand the school to a very large building. This is the smallest elementary campus in the entire SPPS district. The property is unsuitable for this scope of building expansion. The green space on the North side of the building would be reduced by 40%, the open space would no longer be a traditional playground

instead there will be a much smaller strip of area for play that runs along Fairmount Avenue. This area that would be reduced is the primary place that these children have to play, explore and learn to socialize outside of the classroom.

I strongly urge you to visit this location and view the area of open space along Fairmount as the children play during the school day. Imagine that area reduced by 40% and the population of children increased significantly. Have the experts show you the true scale of this proposed building and you will gain a better understanding of the issue. A wide yellow tape showing the proposed building footprint on the Fairmount Ave. open space would open many eyes to the objection this neighborhood has to this project as designed.

Please reverse the BZA's decision and encourage the SPPS to create a reasonable plan that will benefit the children and our neighborhood for many years to come.

Sincerely,

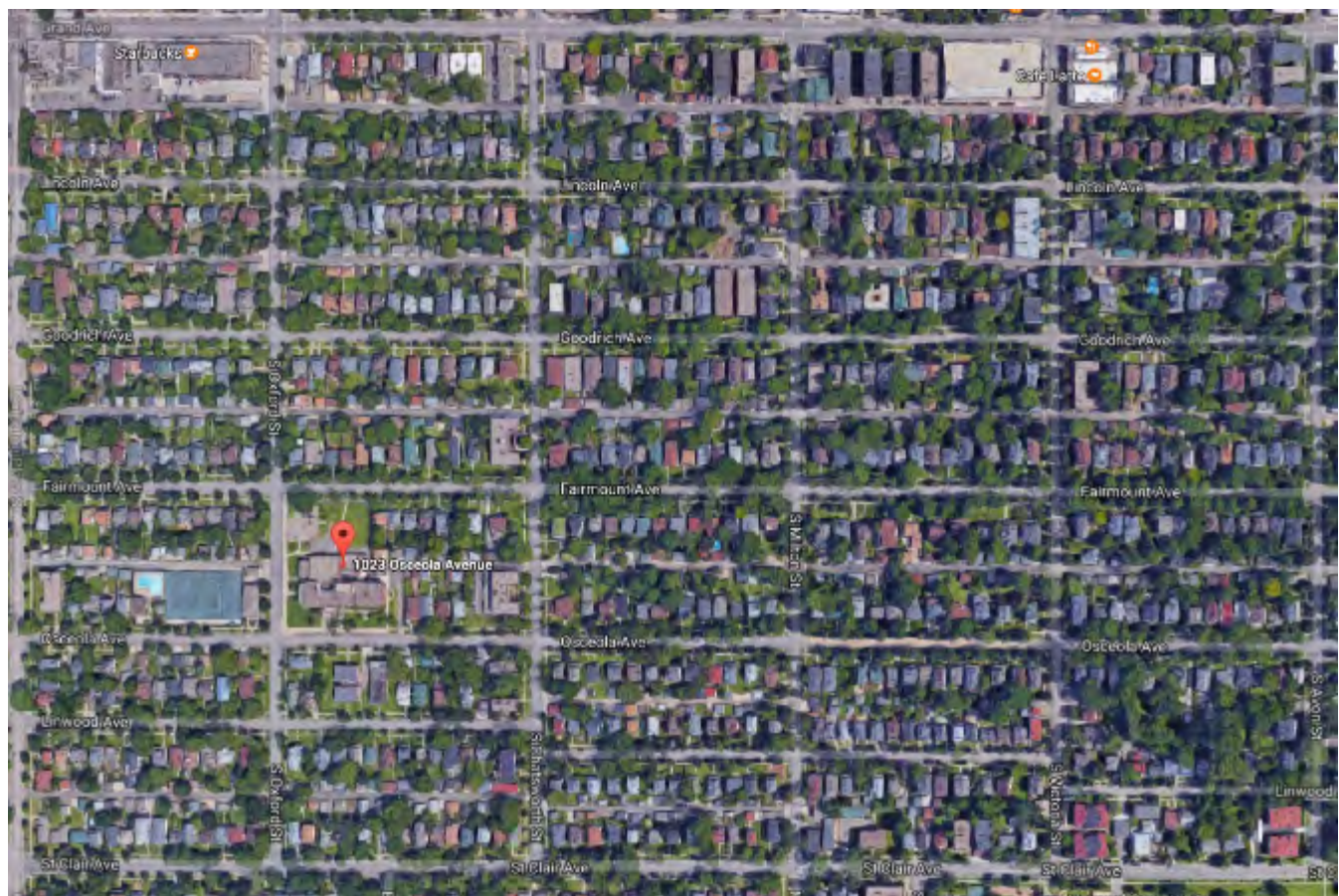
Hugh J. Dillon  
10xx Fairmount Avenue

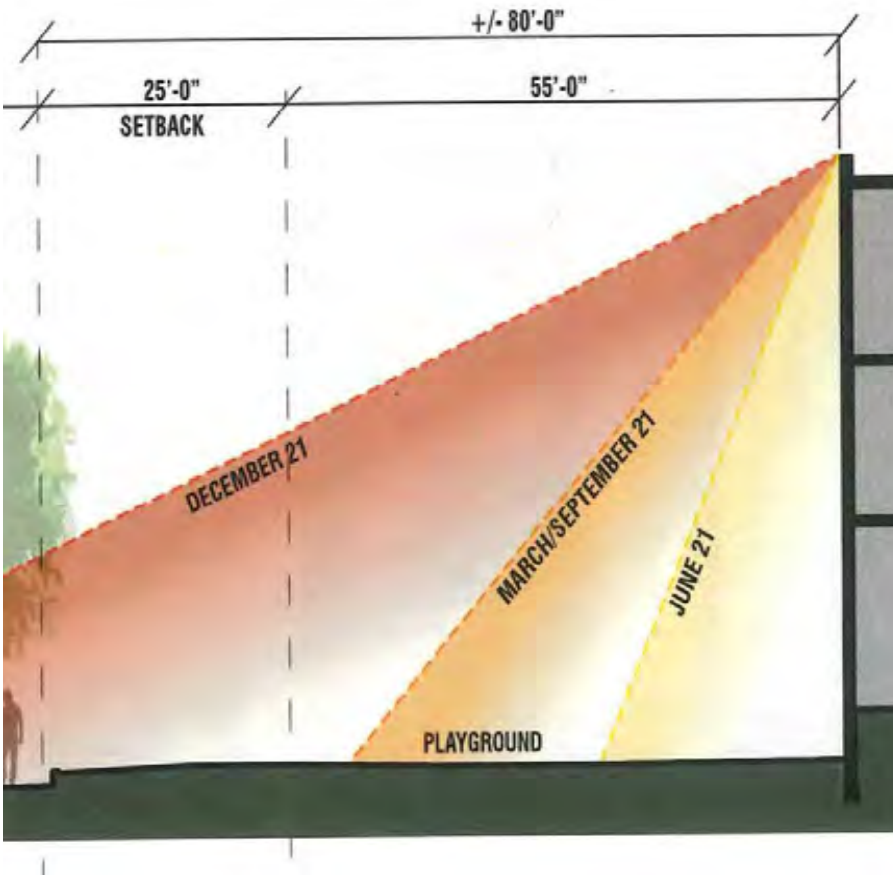
Dear Members of the Saint Paul City Council,

I am writing today to ask that you reverse the Board of Zoning Appeals decision to grant code variances for the expansion of the Linwood School, because I believe the City Council has a responsibility for the preservation of the historic Summit Hill neighborhood that the Board of Zoning Appeals does not.

I'm sure you will hear a great deal of statistics and numbers in this debate - I would alert you to be on the lookout for two numbers that you may hear that I believe disguise the true impact of this expansion.

1) The reduction of the open space on the north side of the School. This area will be reduced by 40%, and it is the last remaining open green space of this size in the neighborhood. You will hear that green space is only being reduced by 10% when counting all grounds around the school, but the truth is it is not possible for children to play baseball or football on a strip of grass adjoining the building, or in the middle of the new "tot park." Here is a map of the area, from St. Clair to Grand, and from Lexington to past Avon (the School is identified with the orange arrow - the top of the map is North).





As you can see, that green space north of the building is the only one of its kind, and 40% of it would be going away. You can also see that for young children who are permitted to go to a playground alone without crossing a major street such as Lexington, Grand, or St. Clair, this is their only playground. The picture to the right is from the City's own shadow study. And what kind of reduced playground are we left with? One that is in shadow the majority of the year - and more than 50% of the time September through March! Is this a "win" for the children who attend the school, or those that live in the neighborhood? Just as we have to advocate for the children who attend the School, we have to advocate for the children who live in the neighborhood. What are we to tell them? That for generations kids and their families learned to socialize and play together in a sunny playground that used to be here, and then we cut it in half and what's left is mostly in shade, but hey kid, that's progress?

2) The variance request for a 47' high structure. In most of the documents I have seen, the footprint variance request is stated as a percentage as it is about 10% over code, but the height variance request is stated as 17'. Sounds a lot better than 56% over code, doesn't it? Also, please look at the drawings of the proposed expansion from the perspective of the intersection of Fairmount and Oxford Avenues and note that there is a (approximate) five foot wall. (The wall exists now and continues to exist in the expansion plans).





This means if you are standing in this location, the top of a 47' tall building will be at least 52' above you.

Also, when the expansion plan was originally presented to the neighborhood, the variance request was for 50'. This was later changed to 47', and SPPS said this was an accommodation to neighborhood concerns. In fact, it was a correction to a mistake - that request should have always been for 47'. I mention this in case this reduction from 50 to 47 is again presented as an "accommodation."

The Comprehensive Plan Area Plan Summary for Summit Hill, amended and adopted by the City Council (2/15/06) provides the guidelines which the Council agrees to abide by with regard to neighborhood development. Repeatedly the Summit Hill Association (SHA) is called out as the City's partner in making recommendations to changes in the neighborhood, and the SHA has recommended denial of these variances. If the guidelines limit new commercial buildings to 30' and mixed use to 36' on Grand Avenue, how can they be ignored (by 56%) a few blocks away in the middle of 1 1/2 and 2 story homes? I think the Council must also consider if it grants these variances if it opens itself up to being challenged to grant similar variances in the future. I have attended a City Council meeting before where a Summit Hill property owner was denied permission to change an existing duplex into a triplex because of the historic nature of the neighborhood, and as far as outside appearances went, all he was doing was adding a door to the garden level of the building. Where would the equity be in denying that request but approving the halving of our one neighborhood playground?

Finally, as reported in the Saint Paul Pioneer Press on April 11th, the SPPS now expects to have 33,000 students by 2026, not the 38,200 by 2024 that was previously projected when this proposal was initiated. SPPS "Facilities Director Tom Parent said the board will consider revisions to the facilities master plan next month." From the short article, it is unclear whether this near 14% decrease in the population would affect the grade levels served at Linwood, but the question needs to be asked.

It saddens me greatly that the neighborhood I love has been unable to debate this proposal without the amount of vitriol that unfortunately seems to permeate our society today - I hope the children at the Linwood School are not being taught if you disagree with someone to ratchet up

the anger and start name calling. I also want you to know that, without exception, every person I know who is against this proposal is a supporter of the Linwood School, and supportive of improvements to the School. It is our neighborhood school, and many of us either sent children there or attended school there. I want better classrooms, a new lunchroom, a new HVAC system, a separate gym, and a reasonable addition - you bet! And I'm happy to pay my taxes for them. I want the best for the kids who attend that school, but I also want the best for the kids who live in the neighborhood. I simply don't think this proposal accomplishes that, and I believe a better proposal could.

Wishing you the best in your deliberations,  
Kelly O'Kane  
10xx Linwood Avenue

Dear City Council Member,

I am writing today to ask you to oppose the two major variances requested for 1023 Osceola at this time. I believe the BZA erred in their decision and the property owner has not met the criteria to be granted the two major variances.

First of all, if you are not familiar with the property in question, please pay a visit prior to the hearing. You will see a small school property on 1/3 of a city block, nestled in a walkable residential neighborhood surrounded by single family homes, duplexes, triplexes, and modest apartment buildings.

I am fully supportive of changes being made to the property and think improvements for ADA compliance, improved heating and cooling, fixing broken lockers, making the outside more aesthetically pleasing, and a separate cafeteria are long overdue. However, the two major variance requests are not necessary for any of these improvements, and the two major variance requests fail to meet the **six criteria established by the City of St. Paul.**

Before I jump into the factual reasons why the property owner should be denied the two major variances at this time, I just want to add a personal note. I love having the school as a neighbor and it brings a smile to my face every time I hear the joyful laughs and screams of the students enjoying and using up every inch of the play space on the north side of the building on days I work from home. I also love when it is filled up on the weeknights and weekends by neighbor kids of all ages. It is a focal point of our community. We have two school-aged children who fit the demographics of many of the students at the school – our children are immigrants, English-language learners, receive special education services, are students of color, and also attend an SPPS magnet school. I see my children in all of these students, which is why on an emotional level I also oppose the current proposed expansion. The children at Linwood deserve better. They need improvements to their school building inside, and they need open play space to run, play, jump, explore. The two major variances, if approved, will shrink the contiguous open play space significantly, and replace open space with a parking lot and a tall building. This is what inequity looks like.

**The proposed major expansion is not in harmony with the neighborhood.** The school is surrounded on three sides by residential streets, and on the other side are single family homes. The school is on about 1/3 of a city block, which is in contrast to other SPPS schools like Randolph Heights, Maxfield, Adams, Galtier, Farnsworth, etc, all of which occupy an entire city block. Other schools like Saint Anthony Park, Riverview West, Hamline, Mississippi Creative Arts, Chelsea Heights and Groveland are attached or adjacent to, and share resources with, Saint Paul Recreation Centers.

The proposed major expansion would have a height of more than 47 feet at the lowest point of measurement, but will exceed 60 feet when measured from the Fairmount side of the building. There are several apartment buildings in our area, and all the buildings are much shorter than the current and proposed school expansion, and all are set back on the property. The apartment buildings across the street on Osceola are under 30 feet in height, and the tallest building, on the corner of Fairmount and Chatsworth, is about 38 feet maximum, measured to find its highest elevation point. Moreover, the proposed expansion would take the school from 27.8% lot coverage to 38.5% lot coverage, which will come at the cost of open play space for children of the school and neighborhood, and does not include the parking lot which is unusable as play space.

**What is driving the need for variances is totally within control of the applicant, SPPS.** They have made a programming decision to move more students to the campus and the major expansion is only needed this reason. They have said they will be adding about 165 students to the campus. Because SPPS has decided to make this school an arts magnet school, they say they need separate rooms for drama, music, dance, performance space, etc. Those are all decisions that are being made by the school district and are completely in their control. SPPS created a dual-campus school and have said that space needs at another school in another neighborhood is the reason why they need to shift kids and put pressure on the space needs at Linwood. They are a public entity and own many properties around the city and have the ability to purchase more. One neighbor adjacent to the school talked to them about buying their property, and the district dismissed the idea.

SPPS's other elementary schools have much more space for expansion; as noted earlier, many sit on an entire city block (the Monroe campus actually has two full city blocks of space), but the district wants to do a large expansion on the smallest school site. Also, arguably, have excess capacity to build at other locations, own a property in the West 7th neighborhood that they are trying to sell, can move schools to meet programming needs (they have done this my children's school once and will be doing so again for the 2018-19 school year), and they can buy and build new school buildings, as they are doing with a new building for the students at RiverEast, plans to build a new middle school on the east side, and recent talks of purchasing a huge property of a current arts and science magnet school just over the city boarder in Woodbury.

**I also want to point out that SPPS does not ask for a parking variance at this location, which would be supported by many in the neighborhood.** This is odd to me, because SPPS asked for one at Saint Anthony Park Elementary, and the BZA granted that in January. They say there will be fewer buses, which means the whole north side of the property along Fairmount is no longer needed during school hours to be a "Bus Only" parking lane, which means teachers

and visitors have more options for on-street parking. They could also put parking spots along the alley, but opt to instead build a new parking lot. I will also note that the Adams Spanish Immersion school plans were changed by SPPS after their district council wanted less parking and more green space.

Thank you for considering my comments. Please oppose these two major variances and ask SPPS to come back with a better plan that either meets the current zoning code or requires variances that meet the six criteria established by the city to grant a variance.

Sincerely,  
Becca Pryse  
10xx Fairmount Ave

April 13, 2017

Dear Councilmember Brendmoen and members of St. Paul City Council:

We are writing to you as constituents from Ward 5, as well as parents of a 3rd grader at Linwood Monroe Arts Plus (LMAp).

To say that LMAp is an amazing school, is an understatement. As parents, we could not have asked for a more dedicated group of teachers, staff and parents. When Principal Bass shared the improvement plan for LMAp, we were excited to see the needs of the children, parents and teachers being addressed. Because it is an arts education school with a DCD and Language Academy designation, we could see clearly how the plan responded to the needs of the populations they have been trusted to serve. This mattered to us.

This plan supports the mission of the school while advancing opportunities for children of color (71%), children with disabilities (17%) and English Language learners (38%). To deny the variances is to deny educational opportunities to the children. To attempt to separate the plight of the LMAp children and their parents from the variances, is to have a narrow, incomplete understanding of educational institutions and the relationship to the communities they serve. For more than a year, our families have been waiting for approval of improvements to LMAp that will directly impact their children. This is too long to wait for a wheelchair bound child to be able to join her classmates on stage, for her to travel from the 3rd floor to the 1st floor just to be able to go to the only accessible bathroom at the school, too long for a new American child to wait for a break out classroom so that she can work one-on-one with a specialist on her language skills, it is just too long for a child's full potential to be put on hold. These are the consequences of this process, children end up as collateral damage. This is shameful.

As members of the St. Paul City Council, you have an opportunity to do the right thing for the children of St. Paul and for public education. As parents, we urge you to deny this appeal and give LMAp children the school they deserve. Please add this letter to the public record.

Thank you so much for your continued service to Ward 5 and our city.

Sincerely,

Chris and Aida Martinez-Freeman  
16xx Huron St  
Saint Paul, MN 55105  
Dear City Council Members,

The variances requested by the St. Paul Public School system for an addition to the Linwood School should not have been granted. My husband and I live 7 blocks away from the school and my daughter and family live even closer. So, the green, open space that is on the north side of the school today is an important contributor to the quality of life in our neighborhood.

Upgrades to the school for ADA compliance, gym and cafeteria facilities are important for the efficient and comfortable operation of the school. But, equally important are the facilities for outdoor organized and free play. Neither should be sacrificed.

Public outdoor spaces also play an important role in neighborhood children's recreation, socializing and motor skill development. In the old days when we all went to our local grade school, the population of kids was the same in the school and in the neighborhood. That is no longer the case with the opportunities provided for children to attend schools whose curriculum enhances their interests and passions. Those schools may not be close to their homes.

Linwood seems to have always been a small population school and will need to stay that way because of the physical limitations of the site. A properly sized, functional and comfortable school with appropriate inside and outside space will serve both the school children and neighborhood children best.

Sincerely,  
Pam Johnson  
8xx Holly Ave]

Members of the City Council,

I am writing to request the City Council of St. Paul reverse the BZA's decision to grant the variances in expanding the Linwood Lower Campus at 1023 Osceola. As a retired educator who understands the needs of students, I find the plans that the administrators of St. Paul Public Schools have advanced for the renovation of the school have not been well-considered when it comes to St. Paul's educational needs and the considerations of the community and neighborhood.

While the school needs updated classrooms and a separate gym cafeteria, expanding the school by creating a mega-building on the smallest elementary campus in the city does not make sense. Updating the heating/cooling system is no doubt needed in the school and working to create a ADA-compliant school is also a positive goal, but expanding the school to accommodate increased enrollment at a time when St. Paul has experienced a decrease in student enrollment is ill advised. Demographer Hazel Reinhardt, who predicted an increase of 2,200 students in 2015 in the student population of St. Paul, has noted a decrease in the number of students of 1,000 students in the last two years instead, according to an April 11th article in the *Pioneer Press*. In the same article, Ms. Reinhardt was reported to have revised her analysis and now anticipates a loss of 2,200 students in the next ten years for a net loss of 4,400. While I realize that some students from Monroe school were slated to be moved to Linwood School, the questions still remain about the student population and the impact of a huge building on the neighborhood and community in general. The zoning board did not consider updated student population information. This failure is a serious error in granting any variances.

Besides the problems I mentioned above, the zoning board has ignored the impact of a building of this size on the community. The board's decision ignores how the proposed school design would reduce by 40% essential open and green space in the neighborhood. This green space is on the Fairmont Avenue side of the school. Because there are no public green spaces south of Grand Avenue, west of Victoria Avenue, north of St. Clair, and east of Lexington, this was a grave mistake on the part of the zoning board. I often see the space north of Linwood School used by parents and their children. I am also aware of how a building taller than normally allowed would shade the remaining greatly reduced playground. I ask the members of the City Council visit the site to consider all the impacts that the expansion proposal would have.

Again, as a retired educator, I fully support improvements to the Linwood School, but as I have detailed, there are critical errors in the current proposal that I believe necessitate that the City Council reverse the Zoning Board's decision.

Thank you for your consideration,  
Patrick Shal  
10xx Linwood Avenue

I am not against the much needed improvements to this building and property, but I am proposed to the current plans. This is a massive addition to a small building on a small parcel of land.

The reasons given for the large expansion are the need to co-locate pre-K with Kindergarten and 4th grade to be co-located with 3rd grade. They mention research about the need to move 4th grade with 3rd grade, but don't provide the detailed references to this research. I believe they stated similar research about 7-8 years ago when they wanted to move 4th -6th grade to Monroe campus. At the time, it was the research showed it was more advantageous for 4th grade students to be in close proximity to 5th grade.

The EAW stated there would be a 50% increase in traffic due to the expansion - that is a huge increase. There are now several times when I can't leave the alley because of cars or buses blocking the entrance (on Osceola).

Also, with the documented continuing decline in student population and a new Superintendent of Schools yet to start, SPPS needs to re-evaluate their facilities planning and modify these plans. I would hope this time they include the neighborhood in these plans from the beginning.

All three of our children attended and graduated from Saint Paul Public Schools and received a great education. They also attended Linwood-Monroe and before that Linwood Elementary (prior to merging with Monroe).

Sincerely,  
Dan Grundmeier  
10xx Fairmount Avenue

Dear Council Members,

Thank you for your serious consideration of the appeal of Lynn and Val Di Euliis to the decision of Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) approving a variance request to construct an addition on to the Linwood Monroe Arts elementary school building at 1023 Osceola Avenue. This appeal is scheduled for review at the April 19 meeting of the Council.

I am strongly opposed to the Linwood variance and am appealing to you to do what the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) failed to do: uphold the laws of the City of St. Paul. While I have sympathy for why the BZA did not uphold the law, the fact remains that they did not do so. Likewise, I have sympathy for why it will be difficult for you to uphold the law, yet you have an obligation to do so.

Upholding the law will be difficult because of the “optics” of the Linwood expansion project. You will be reviewing a building project whose goals are to provide the most effective learning environment for the children of St. Paul, and specifically the children of the Linwood A+ Arts Program. This is a laudable goal, and of course it is in the best interest of all citizens that our young people receive an excellent education. You will be faced with descriptions from the teachers and parents of the Linwood Lower School of the daily hardships faced by students with disabilities. These stories are absolutely compelling and heartbreaking, and the St. Paul School System should be chastised for being long overdue in addressing the physical space for these students. You may also be tempted to succumb to the strategy of the proponents of the project, namely to marginalize the position of the opponents because they are less racially diverse and more affluent than the proponents of the project. This strategy on the part of the opponents has concerned me deeply as it represents the worst of politics – full of rhetoric and personal attack, rather than a meaningful and factual approach on how to meet the needs of the community.

But although you have been presented with a proposal from the St. Paul Public School System that has significant merit, it simply does not meet the law. I urge you to require that the St. Paul Public School System demonstrate point by point how their project meets the variance code. Somehow, the burden of proof of the applicants (for the variance) to show how their project **does** meet the requirements for the two major variances has shifted to the opponents to show how the project **does not** meet the requirements for the variances. The BZA process allowed the applicants and proponents to describe their goals for the project without having to stipulate how it even meets the variance code! But, in 30% of that time, the opponents, in no more than 90-second chunks, were expected to provide a cogent rebuttal of the conditions of the variance.

But, the conditions of the variance are not met. Not one of the six conditions is met. Most notably:

A. NOT MET: “The variance is in harmony with the general purposes of the zoning code.”

The variances do not promote and protect the aesthetics and general welfare of the community as required by § 60.103(a). The proposed design puts a massive building on the smallest elementary school campus in the St. Paul School System. I urge you to come see the property for yourself and visualize the impact of the proposed construction. The aesthetics, size, scale, and siting of the proposed building are inappropriate to the historic character of our neighborhood. But more importantly, the general welfare of the community is harmed by the essential elimination of the only existing green space between Dale, Lexington, Grand and St. Clair. The current green space is a highly utilized, important neighborhood (and Linwood school!) asset, and is the only place children can gather to kick around a ball without having to cross a major road. There is no question that if the Linwood School expands per the current building proposal, neighborhood families will spend less time outdoors, less time exercising, and less time building friendships and community with each other.

B. NOT MET: “The plight of the landowner is due to circumstances unique to the property not created by the landowner.”

The St. Paul School System has created its own plight by attempting to increase their building’s population, program, and addition height and size beyond what the property will allow. This is a discretionary change by the St. Paul School System, and many reasonable programming and building alternatives exist. During the BZA meeting, the St. Paul School System was asked what they expected the usage of the Linwood Campus would be ten years from now. The applicant actually laughed and said that the BZA’s crystal ball was as good as his, and acknowledged that the school has changed its mission and use many times in its history and is likely to do so in the future. To the neighbors of this property, this is far from a laughing matter. We will live with this inappropriate, oversized structure

forever. We will experience the loss of the Linwood green space forever. And we will experience these losses in the long term because of programming decision being made in the short term.

You may ask why the staff report and the BZA determined that the variances met the condition of the code. Given that the data simply do not support these conclusions, we can only assume that they have succumbed to the considerable political pressures of the situation. But as our lawmakers, you cannot do the same. It is critical that you uphold the law in just these situations. Because the Zoning Code is there to protect against these pressures, to protect against short-term goals versus long-term goals, and to protect against a very human desire to side with an apparent “underdog” even when it is not supported by the law.

So, I entreat you to fulfill your responsibility to uphold the law, so that the City of St. Paul does not foolishly give up the community benefit that results from constructing properties within the Zoning Code. I believe that a balance can be struck between the needs of the students and faculty at the Linwood School and the neighborhood stakeholders of this property. I entreat you to send the St. Paul School System back to the drawing board.

Thanks for your consideration of the filed appeal.

Cheri Kedrowski  
10xx Goodrich Ave

**From:**

**Sent:** Monday, April 17, 2017 9:57 PM

**To:** #CI-StPaul\_Ward1

**Subject:** LMAP variance

I am an LMAP parent and I am in full support of the expansion. Thank you  
Lauren Gilbert

**From:** Kelsey Henderson [<mailto:advocatesforlmap@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** Monday, April 17, 2017 8:44 PM

**To:** #CI-StPaul\_Ward1

**Cc:** Benner II, Jerome (CI-StPaul)

**Subject:** Letter of Support for LMAP Variance

From: Kelsey Henderson

Email Address:

Address: 14xx Portland Ave

Relationship to LMAP: a supporter of public education in St. Paul

I strongly support the two variances granted to Linwood Monroe Arts Plus to bring buildings on both of its campuses into the 21st century. As a supporter of public education in St. Paul, I encourage you to as well.

Sincerely,

Kelsey Henderson



**From:** Jones, Paul  
**Sent:** Monday, April 17, 2017 11:46 PM  
**To:** #CI-StPaul\_Ward3  
**Subject:** Linwood Monroe variance

Hi Chris, I am writing in support of the variance for Linwood Monroe Arts Plus. I live at 1235 Edgumbe Road and have a daughter at Monroe middle school. I have two younger sons at Randolph Heights. So I admit that I am one step removed from the impact of the decision, both as a neighbor and as a parent but I am close enough to both to have a stake in the outcome.

Neighbors seem to be in favor of keeping the school park, but not the school. This is a school and the well-being of the students and teachers should be the priority. The updated building design considers the neighborhood concerns and is a reasonable compromise. I would feel the same if I lived across the street.

In addition, our public schools face significant headwinds now and likely for years to come. Investment in public schools shows that St. Paul is committed to the future of all students.

Paul Jones

**From:** Michael Sonn [<mailto:advocatesforlmap@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 18, 2017 11:11 AM  
**To:** #CI-StPaul\_Ward3  
**Cc:** Benner II, Jerome (CI-StPaul)  
**Subject:** Letter of Support for LMAP Variance

From: Michael Sonn

Email Address:

Address: 14xx Wellesley Ave

Relationship to LMAP: a supporter of public education in St. Paul

I would like to thank you for your service, and am grateful for the work that you do. I am writing to express my support for the proposed upgrades to Linwood Monroe Arts Plus facilities on both campuses. The addition to the Lower campus (Linwood) building will allow the school to make a number of essential updates, such as making both buildings accessible for students with limited mobility, bringing undersized classrooms on both campuses up to size standards, and moving four-year-old pre-K students and nine-year-old fourth graders out of the middle school environment into the more appropriate environment of the elementary school. The addition will also increase the amount of available dedicated play space by over 1,000 sf and give students the dedicated place they currently do not have to play inside on bad weather days. At the Upper school (Monroe), where some classrooms are only half the size that SPPS standards call for, all classrooms will be brought up to adequate sizes. I strongly support the two zoning variances that Linwood Monroe has been granted to be able to bring both of its buildings into the twenty-first century, and appreciate the willingness of SPPS to adjust its plans by making several major revisions based on community input. As someone who believes in the importance of a vibrant public education system, I hope that you will support them, too.

Please look to our children, their future, and the city's future. We can't stop progress because several neighbors want nothing to change. Again and again St Paul runs into the wall of

opposition as other cities continue to pass us by. We are the future. These children are the future. Let's move forward together.

Sincerely,  
Michael Sonn

**From:** Robert Wales [<mailto:advocatesforlmap@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** Tuesday, April 18, 2017 11:34 AM

**To:** #CI-StPaul\_Ward3

**Cc:** Benner II, Jerome (CI-StPaul)

**Subject:** Letter of Support for LMAP Variance

From: Robert Wales

Email Address:

Address: 19xx Sheridan Ave

Relationship to LMAP: a supporter of public education in St. Paul

I would like to thank you for your service, and am grateful for the work that you do. I am writing to express my support for the proposed upgrades to Linwood Monroe Arts Plus facilities on both campuses. The addition to the Lower campus (Linwood) building will allow the school to make a number of essential updates, such as making both buildings accessible for students with limited mobility, bringing undersized classrooms on both campuses up to size standards, and moving four-year-old pre-K students and nine-year-old fourth graders out of the middle school environment into the more appropriate environment of the elementary school. The addition will also increase the amount of available dedicated play space by over 1,000 sf and give students the dedicated place they currently do not have to play inside on bad weather days. At the Upper school (Monroe), where some classrooms are only half the size that SPPS standards call for, all classrooms will be brought up to adequate sizes. I strongly support the two zoning variances that Linwood Monroe has been granted to be able to bring both of its buildings into the twenty-first century, and appreciate the willingness of SPPS to adjust its plans by making several major revisions based on community input. As someone who believes in the importance of a vibrant public education system, I hope that you will support them, too.

Sincerely,  
Robert Wales

**From:** Joshua D. Anderson [<mailto:advocatesforlmap@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** Tuesday, April 18, 2017 11:36 AM

**To:** #CI-StPaul\_Ward3

**Cc:** Benner II, Jerome (CI-StPaul)

**Subject:** Letter of Support for LMAP Variance

From: Joshua D. Anderson

Email Address:

Address: 14xx Pleasant Avenue

Relationship to LMAP: St. Paul resident and potential LMAP parent

I would like to thank you for your service, and am grateful for the work that you do. I am writing to express my support for the proposed upgrades to Linwood Monroe Arts Plus facilities on both campuses. The addition to the Lower campus (Linwood) building will allow the school to make a number of essential updates, such as making both buildings accessible for students with limited mobility, bringing undersized classrooms on both campuses up to size standards, and moving four-year-old pre-K students and nine-year-old fourth graders out of the middle school environment into the more appropriate environment of the elementary school. The addition will also increase the amount of available dedicated play space by over 1,000 sf and give students the dedicated place they currently do

not have to play inside on bad weather days. At the Upper school (Monroe), where some classrooms are only half the size that SPPS standards call for, all classrooms will be brought up to adequate sizes. I strongly support the two zoning variances that Linwood Monroe has been granted to be able to bring both of its buildings into the twenty-first century, and appreciate the willingness of SPPS to adjust its plans by making several major revisions based on community input. As someone who believes in the importance of a vibrant public education system, I hope that you will support them, too.

Sincerely,

Joshua D. Anderson

**From:** EMily Nooney

**Sent:** Tuesday, April 18, 2017 11:43 AM

**To:** \*CI-StPaul\_Contact-Council; #CI-StPaul\_Ward2

**Subject:** Oppose 1023 Osceola / Linwood School variance

I am a parent of an SPPS student and I am a neighbor of the Linwood School and Ward 2 resident. I request that the zoning variance request and appeal for the proposed Linwood Lower school (1023 Osceola Avenue) be denied

The current and future students of Linwood School (in any form) deserve more. They deserve a fully ADA compliant school building with sufficient indoor and outdoor space for the number of children. The indoor space should be comfortable and designed for the appropriate usage and number of students. The outdoor space should also be comfortable and designed for the appropriate usage and number of children. The children of an Arts magnet deserve to have indoor facilities to perform and practice. They also need to have outdoor space to perform and practice.

As a parent and neighbor hearing that the outdoor space will be reduced saddens me. When I happen by the school on a normal day the school children use and fill the current outdoor space, to reduce it would be a mistake that can't be undone.

This ill suited project does not meet a common sense standard of how we should be utilizing the limited budget of the SPPS. I am familiar with Adams school and if you drive by the Adams it is clear there is room for expansion while maintaining adequate green space. When I drive by Monroe school I see a huge building and a large outdoor space available for those children, again an appropriate common sense decision. When I drive past Linwood I see a small building with limited outdoor space that is being fully utilized at recess. A plan to increase the student population at the Linwood location and decrease the outdoor space is not appropriate.

Thank you for serving the public and please consider denying the variance and ensuring that the SPPS provides all children with access to high quality environments.

Emily McMahon

8xx Osceola Avenue

**From:** Ang Dezelske [<mailto:advocatesforlmap@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** Tuesday, April 18, 2017 11:42 AM

**To:** #CI-StPaul\_Ward2

**Cc:** Benner II, Jerome (CI-StPaul)

**Subject:** Letter of Support for LMAP Variance

From: Ang Dezelske

Email Address:

Address: 2xx 5th St E, St Paul, MN 55101

Relationship to LMAP: a supporter of public education in St. Paul

I would like to thank you for your service, and am grateful for the work that you do. I am writing to express my support for the proposed upgrades to Linwood Monroe Arts Plus facilities on both

campuses. The addition to the Lower campus (Linwood) building will allow the school to make a number of essential updates, such as making both buildings accessible for students with limited mobility, bringing undersized classrooms on both campuses up to size standards, and moving four-year-old pre-K students and nine-year-old fourth graders out of the middle school environment into the more appropriate environment of the elementary school. The addition will also increase the amount of available dedicated play space by over 1,000 sf and give students the dedicated place they currently do not have to play inside on bad weather days. At the Upper school (Monroe), where some classrooms are only half the size that SPPS standards call for, all classrooms will be brought up to adequate sizes. I strongly support the two zoning variances that Linwood Monroe has been granted to be able to bring both of its buildings into the twenty-first century, and appreciate the willingness of SPPS to adjust its plans by making several major revisions based on community input. As someone who believes in the importance of a vibrant public education system, I hope that you will support them, too.

Sincerely,

Ang Dezelske

I have some concerns about the Linwood proposal due to the limited size of the site.

When the applicant presented this project to us on February 13, he acknowledged that this plan asks staff as well as the neighborhood to accept “**certain impediments and compromises.**” These were Mr. Parent's exact words. So if this project is carried out, the end result will not be optimal. One obvious way in which it will not be optimal is that there will not be enough green space and daylight on the site.

But that is not the proposed project's only deficiency. SPPS's main reason for moving Pre-K and fourth grade to Linwood is to make it consistent with the district's goal of grouping Pre-K through 5 in one building. SPPS acknowledges that the Linwood site is too small to make this happen. So moving fourth grade to Linwood will not achieve this goal. Linwood will still not be consistent with the district's Pre-K through 5 model. If Linwood can't be made consistent with the model, why bring fourth grade to the site, why even bring Pre-K to the site? Why not find a different site altogether?

The proposed addition to Linwood will have a permanent impact on the neighborhood, while the program at Linwood will likely change over the years. The applicant acknowledged that things will always change within the school district. In fact, Linwood's program is likely to change in the near future as SPPS is hoping to turn Pre-K into a full-day

program. If that happens, the proposal before us will not be able to accommodate all the pre-school children at Linwood. The project will be undersized from the get-go.

**I think we all agree that quality schools are a priority, but I believe that this site is not large enough to accommodate additional students and that SPPS has other options. So, I move denial of the variance requests based on Findings 1, 2 , 3, 4 and 6.**

**I suggest revising Findings 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 as follows:**

Finding 1. This project is **not** in harmony with the general purposes and intent of the zoning code. The height and lot coverage maximums were established to strike a balance between a property owner's desire to build and neighboring properties' interests in open space and sunlight. This finding is **not** met for both requested variances.

Finding 2. The proposed addition to this school is inconsistent with other aspects of the Comprehensive Plan which promote preservation of green space and the character of historic neighborhoods. This finding is **not** met for both requested variances.

Finding 3. The property owner could use the property in a reasonable manner with a smaller addition tht requires no variance.

Finding 4. The plight of the landowner is created by the landowner. SPPS has created the problem by proposing to transfer additional grades to the school. The current building could be renovated to meet today's educational standards if no additional programs were added. Therefore, this finding is **not** met for both requested variances.

Finding 6. The variance **will** alter the essential character of the surrounding area. The proposed building will detract from the residential character of the area because it will be out of scale with the neighborhood and with the size of its property. This finding is **not** met for both requested variances.

**From:** Emily Kalkbrenner [<mailto:advocatesforlmap@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** Tuesday, April 18, 2017 8:42 AM

**To:** #CI-StPaul\_Ward1

**Cc:** Benner II, Jerome (CI-StPaul)

**Subject:** Letter of Support for LMAP Variance

**From:** Emily Kalkbrenner

**Email Address:**

**Address:** 1xx County Road B2 East, Little Canada, MN 55117

**Relationship to LMAP:** an LMAP employee, a supporter of public education in St. Paul

I would like to thank you for your service, and am grateful for the work that you do. I am writing to express my support for the proposed upgrades to Linwood Monroe Arts Plus facilities on both campuses. The addition to the Lower campus (Linwood) building will allow the school to make a number of essential updates, such as making both buildings accessible for students with limited mobility, bringing undersized classrooms on both campuses up to size standards, and moving four-year-old pre-K students and nine-year-old fourth graders out of the middle school environment into the more appropriate environment of the elementary school. The addition will also increase the amount of available dedicated play space by over 1,000 sf and give students the dedicated place they currently do not have to play inside on bad weather days. At the Upper school (Monroe), where some classrooms are only half the size that SPPS standards call for, all classrooms will be brought up to adequate sizes. I strongly support the two zoning variances that Linwood Monroe has been granted to be able to bring both of its buildings into the twenty-first century, and appreciate the willingness of SPPS to adjust its plans by making several major revisions based on community input. As someone who believes in the importance of a vibrant public education system, I hope that you will support them, too.

Sincerely,

Emily Kalkbrenner

Mr. Stark,

I am writing to express my strong support for the two zoning variances that Linwood Monroe Arts Plus has been granted to be able to bring both of its buildings into the twenty-first century. The major revisions to the plans that SPPS has made based on community input since the initial plan was announced in March 2016 have made it dramatically better, and the new plan will create a much better learning environment for the school's students and teachers. As someone who believes in the importance of a vibrant public education system, I hope that you will uphold both variances as they have been granted.

Thank you for your work and your time,

Mark Russo

**From:** Jessica Milligan

**Email Address:**

**Address:** 21xx Lincoln Ave, St Paul

**Relationship to LMAP:** a supporter of public education in St. Paul

I am writing to express my strong support for the two zoning variances that Linwood Monroe Arts Plus has been granted to be able to bring both of its buildings into the twenty-first century. The major revisions to the plans that SPPS has made based on community input since the initial plan was announced in March 2016 have made it dramatically better, and the new plan will create a much better learning environment for the school's students and teachers. As someone who believes in the importance of a vibrant public education system, I hope that you will uphold both variances as they have been granted.

Sincerely,  
Jessica Milligan

From: Sarah McGee

Email Address:

Address: 8xx Emerald Street

Relationship to LMAP: a supporter of public education in St. Paul

I strongly support the two variances granted to Linwood Monroe Arts Plus to bring buildings on both of its campuses into the 21st century. As a supporter of public education in St. Paul, I encourage you to as well.

Sincerely,  
Sarah McGee

Dear President Stark and Members of the Saint Paul City Council,

I would like to thank you for your service, and am grateful for the work that you do. I am writing to express my support for the proposed upgrades to Linwood Monroe Arts Plus facilities on both campuses. The addition to the Lower campus (Linwood) building will allow the school to make a number of essential updates, such as making both buildings accessible for students with limited mobility, bringing undersized classrooms on both campuses up to size standards, and moving four-year-old pre-K students and nine-year-old fourth graders out of the middle school environment into the more appropriate environment of the elementary school. The addition will also increase the amount of available dedicated play space by over 1,000 sf and give students the dedicated place they currently do not have to play inside on bad weather days. At the Upper school (Monroe), where some classrooms are only half the size that SPPS standards call for, all classrooms will be brought up to adequate sizes. I strongly support the two zoning variances that Linwood Monroe has been granted to be able to bring both of its buildings into the twenty-first century, and appreciate the willingness of SPPS to adjust its plans by making several major revisions based on community input. As someone who believes in the importance of a vibrant public education system, I hope that you will support them, too.

My son Henry has been attending Linwood Monroe for four years, since the second grade. We feel very fortunate to have this gem of a school as an option, particularly in Area F. My son was born in Haiti, was adopted at age 3, has been diagnosed with ADHD, sensory processing disorder, and anxiety disorder. We wanted a school with more diversity than Randolph Heights, our neighborhood school. Henry went to LNFI for kindergarten and first grade, but that turned out to not be a good fit for him. We are so grateful for all of the amazing aspects of Linwood Monroe's teachers, staff, curriculum, and mission and vision. The arts infused education and the focus of understanding and appreciating a child's learning styles and strengths are hallmarks of

the school. Henry has gone from having a lot of behavioral problems to being a model student. His grades and performance have improved, and more importantly, his confidence. I have been very impressed at how the staff and teachers help children like my son, who can “fall between the cracks” because they are not perfect, talented and gifted students who are quiet and do everything they are told, and yet, they don’t have an IEP. Paraprofessionals assigned to other kids have helped my son out when he’s had problems with his work or social problems with another child. Linwood Monroe needs to stay at its current locations, with improved facilities, so that all of the children and their families who depend on the unique offerings can receive them in this community: the arts infused education, the responsive classroom, the language academy, and the programs for children with developmental and cognitive delays.

While I can appreciate some of the concerns of the 41 individuals who appealed to the hearing of the BZA, I find it deplorable that their concerns be taken into account over and above the needs of the students at Linwood Monroe, their families, and the teachers and the staff. I am no lawyer, but there appears to be no legal grounds for the appeal; these individuals just didn’t like the ruling they received. While that is their right, I have a difficult time watching their obstruction after a year’s worth of meetings and compromises on the part of the SPPS to alter the school’s plan to appease their

concerns. I certainly don’t understand how the concerns of these 41 individuals, from 22 households that are near the school, outweigh the concerns and needs of the school children, their teachers, families, and all of the supporters who have signed petitions, written letters, and worked on behalf of the school to support the needed expansion.

Linwood Monroe Arts Plus is a wonderful school that is doing a lot of the heavy lifting to close the achievement gap. I ask you to please support the school expansion so that this school, and all of the others identified in the Facilities Master Plan, can effectively serve the students of Saint Paul who deserve a quality public education in adequate facilities.

Thank you very much for your consideration,  
Amy Brisben, Ph.D.  
12xx James Ave 55105

Dear Councilmember

I strongly support the two variance granted to Linwood Monroe Arts Plus to bring its buildings into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

As a supporter of public education in Saint Paul, I encourage you to as well.

Eric Smith

From: Katie Diaz

Email Address:

Address: 2x west george street, st. paul

Relationship to LMAP: an LMAP parent

I would like to thank you for your service, and am grateful for the work that you do. I am writing to express my support for the proposed upgrades to Linwood Monroe Arts Plus facilities on both campuses. The addition to the Lower campus (Linwood) building will allow the school to make a number of essential updates, such as making both buildings accessible for students with limited



mobility, bringing undersized classrooms on both campuses up to size standards, and moving four-year-old pre-K students and nine-year-old fourth graders out of the middle school environment into the more appropriate environment of the elementary school. The addition will also increase the amount of available dedicated play space by over 1,000 sf and give students the dedicated place they currently do not have to play inside on bad weather days. At the Upper school (Monroe), where some classrooms are only half the size that SPPS standards call for, all classrooms will be brought up to adequate sizes. I strongly support the two zoning variances that Linwood Monroe has been granted to be able to bring both of its buildings into the twenty-first century, and appreciate the willingness of SPPS to adjust its plans by making several major revisions based on community input. As someone who believes in the importance of a vibrant public education system, I hope that you will support them, too.

Sincerely,  
Katie Diaz

Council member Noecker, I am writing this short note just to let you know my thoughts regarding the Linwood expansion plans.

Strong public schools are important to our community. Linwood-Monroe is an excellent school. I encourage you to stop in and see for yourself. The two variances it is requesting are vital to bring the school up to date.

The most vocal opposition comes from residents who send their students to Saint Paul Academy.

Donald Jobe  
1xx Elm Street

**From:** Casey Peterson [<mailto:advocatesforlmap@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** Tuesday, April 18, 2017 1:22 PM

**To:** #CI-StPaul\_Ward4

**Subject:** Letter of Support for LMAP Variance

From: Casey Peterson

Address: 17xx Hubbard Ave Saint Paul 55104

Relationship to LMAP: a supporter of public education in St. Paul

I would like to thank you for your service, and am grateful for the work that you do. I am writing to express my support for the proposed upgrades to Linwood Monroe Arts Plus facilities on both campuses. The addition to the Lower campus (Linwood) building will allow the school to make a number of essential updates, such as making both buildings accessible for students with limited mobility, bringing undersized classrooms on both campuses up to size standards, and moving four-year-old pre-K students and nine-year-old fourth graders out of the middle school environment into the more appropriate environment of the elementary school. The addition will also increase the amount of available dedicated play space by over 1,000 sf and give students the dedicated place they currently do not have to play inside on bad weather days. At the Upper school (Monroe), where some classrooms are only half the size that SPPS standards call for, all classrooms will be brought up to adequate sizes. I strongly support the two zoning variances that Linwood Monroe has been granted to be able to bring both of its buildings into the twenty-first century, and appreciate the willingness of SPPS to adjust its plans by making several major revisions based on community input. As someone who believes in the importance of a vibrant public education system, I hope that you will support them, too.

Thank you again, Russ, for all of your hard/good work in representing Ward 4.

Sincerely, Casey Peterson

**From:** Atom Robinson [<mailto:advocatesforlmap@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** Tuesday, April 18, 2017 4:22 PM

**To:** #CI-StPaul\_Ward1

**Cc:** Benner II, Jerome (CI-StPaul)

**Subject:** Letter of Support for LMAP Variance

From: Atom Robinson

Email Address:

Address: 9xx Charles Ave, St. Paul, MN 55104

Relationship to LMAP: an LMAP parent

I would like to thank you for your service, and am grateful for the work that you do. I am writing to express my support for the proposed upgrades to Linwood Monroe Arts Plus facilities on both campuses. The addition to the Lower campus (Linwood) building will allow the school to make a number of essential updates, such as making both buildings accessible for students with limited mobility, bringing undersized classrooms on both campuses up to size standards, and moving four-year-old pre-K students and nine-year-old fourth graders out of the middle school environment into the more appropriate environment of the elementary school. The addition will also increase the amount of available dedicated play space by over 1,000 sf and give students the dedicated place they currently do not have to play inside on bad weather days. At the Upper school (Monroe), where some classrooms are only half the size that SPPS standards call for, all classrooms will be brought up to adequate sizes. I strongly support the two zoning variances that Linwood Monroe has been granted to be able to bring both of its buildings into the twenty-first century, and appreciate the willingness of SPPS to adjust its plans by making several major revisions based on community input. As someone who believes in the importance of a vibrant public education system, I hope that you will support them, too.

Hi Council Member Thao - I hope my family can count on your support for the zoning variances for my daughter, Kate's school!

Sincerely,

Atom Robinson

Dear City Council Members,

I am writing to you to please reverse the BZA's decision to grant the height and lot coverage variances for the Linwood school at 1023 Osceola. The oversized addition that requires these variances is too large for the small site and takes away the very important green, open space on the north side of the building that is used most days throughout the school year by the students and in every season by the neighborhood children.

We all support the needed improvements to the school, like a separate gym and lunchroom, updated HVAC, and making the school ADA compliant. However, these can all be accomplished for the current school population with a smaller design that does not require variances.

Please consider the lasting impact that this huge addition and loss of north side open space will have on generations to come. School populations are always changing, but once this addition is built, it will be a permanent change to this neighborhood.

Thank you,

Kevin Johnson

8xx Holly Avenue

Dear Council Members,

Thank you for your consideration to appeal the BZA variance approval of the addition to the Linwood Monroe Arts elementary school building at 1023 Osceola Avenue. This appeal is scheduled for review at the April 19 meeting of the Council.

I am strongly opposed to the Linwood variance and am appealing to you to uphold the laws of the City of St. Paul by denying the variance request. As both heart wrenching and painful as this entire process has become the addition of the school simply does not meet the requirements of a variance for the following reasons:

The variance is **not** in harmony with the general purposes of the zoning code.

The variance is requesting something simply too big for the space which both virtually eliminates the children's only outdoor play space<sup>1</sup> as well as completely alters the current architecture of the neighborhood.

In addition the playground, physically and financially supported and constructed with the help of the neighborhood, is the only green space between four major blocks of traffic, Lexington, Grand, St. Clair and Dale streets. We are a neighborhood of 50% renters and this space is essential to the health and well-being of the neighborhood.

Allowing this variance removes the only space some kids have to play. The plight of the landowner is **NOT** due to circumstances unique to the property not created by the landowner."

The Saint Paul School System is creating this "plight" by attempting to create something that is too big for the space.

There are other spaces and places for an improved school, one that befits the size and needs of the kids, not shortcutting them on playground space.

A recent article came out with Saint Paul School enrollment numbers dropping and the Facilities Master Plan manager was quoted as saying they would have to make adjustments. This variance is going against even his words.

In a recent BZA meeting this same Master plan manager was asked what the 10 year expected usage of the campus would be and he laughed and said he that the BZA has just as good a crystal ball.

This is not a laughing matter because in ten years, or five or two, (see Galtier school) it is the neighborhood which will be unalterably desecrated by a monstrous building with no yard space. Both the parents and the neighbors agree that this school is in need of updating but adding kids and doubling the size and scope of the school is not appropriate to the size of the site nor does it meet the legal needs of the variance.

In summary, vote with the recognition that this is a decision for longer than five years, vote to make this work for everyone, but mostly vote to uphold the law. It is this vote which will allow the necessary time for a solution that works for the continued existence of this delicately balanced situation.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Tim Lynch

10xx Fairmount Avenue

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<sup>1</sup>[1] In addition to the elimination of the majority of the outdoor play space the remainder of the play space is currently designed for kid's younger than the ones the school district has scheduled to add to the school.

April 16, 2017

Dear City Councilmembers,

I have lived in St. Paul for 35 of my 43 years. My roots here run deep. My brother was a student at Linwood School.

I am a former public school teacher, co-author of the state's leading history textbook, *Northern Lights*, and have won awards for my work as a public historian.

I am a neighbor of the Linwood School, and I am deeply opposed to the proposed expansion.

You may not know this, but for over 150 years, St. Paul Public Schools were a part of the city government. The City collected taxes to pay for schools, and the City oversaw the School Board. For over 150 years, this system worked fairly well- the needs of students, schools, and school families were considered in the context of the broader needs and concerns of the city- the park system, the police and fire department, tax payers, businesses, and residents. During this time period, the health of the Public Schools and the health of the City were deeply connected and intertwined. The City understood and supported the needs of the public schools. The public schools understood and supported the needs of the City. In fact, Public School Grounds were specifically designed for the broader good:

"Schools are public property and should serve the community in every way possible, not only for the parent-teacher association activities but also for the recreational and cultural needs of all the people in the district. The grounds should be developed and used as community playgrounds in conjunction with city playgrounds facilities." (1944 report "Your Schools and Their Needs")

In 1965, St. Paul Public School was established as an Independent School District, and is now its own government entity. While this change solved some problems, it has created others. In regards to the Linwood School debate, I want to draw your attention to these issues:

***Saint Paul Schools is not concerned with the broader health and balance of the City, and dismissive of the values and zoning codes established in the City Comprehensive Plan.***

As their website states: "SPPS' first and primary obligation is to serve the best interests of its students." (RiverEast School FAQ)

When meeting to discuss the neighborhood's concerns about the school, Jackie Turner, Chief Communications Officer said "If we listen and redesign the school in response to you, what kind of precedent does that create for other neighborhoods?" (Paraphrased from April 2016 conversation with author.)

SPPS never created a "Plan B" for the school that would follow existing zoning codes, and described their belief that getting variances would "be a slam dunk." (Trinh Tranberg, Facilities staff, March 2016 conversation with author.)

When a group of neighbors developed a compromise plan that would allow grades Pre-K-3 to be at Linwood, but would keep the building at two stories, require smaller variances, require grade 4 to stay at Monroe, and save more of the playground, SPPS dismissed it out of hand.

***St. Paul Public Schools has a history of poor decisions on building investment choices.***

They renovated Galtier School in 2014, then proposed closing it in 2016. The school is on life-support right now.

*St. Paul Public Schools makes inconsistent and irrational choices about properties.* St. Paul Public Schools wants to sell the abandoned 5.4-acre property at 900 Albion Street for ~\$5 million and meanwhile has bought a new 5.5-acre site for it's RiverEast Program on Hyatt Avenue for \$2.5 million. That may sound like a fiscally good idea, except the Hyatt Avenue site is contaminated with industrial waste and would need a completely new building on it, too! They say the Albion site can't work because it's triangular – but Como Park High School and L'Etoile du Nord seem to be working quite well.

***St. Paul Schools rational for this project is extremely shaky and internally flawed.***

They argue that studies show that kids ought to be banded *from grades K-3*, but then say they ought to move kids *in grade 4*.

They say that Pre-K is part of their school program, yet a majority of the Pre-K students matriculate to schools that are not Linwood.

They say they need to move grades and students to Monroe to make space for more/ larger classrooms at the Monroe Site, but Monroe already has vastly more space (interior and exterior) and more space per pupil than Linwood. And it has an auto repair shop that has nothing to do with Monroe program and could be moved.

They say that the historic and small interior spaces of the building are inadequate and inappropriate and not worth preserving, then say the historic and high exterior of the building ought to be matched in the addition.

They say that meeting best practice for interior instruction spaces is critical, but ignore the standards for adequate outdoor space.

They are ignoring the reality that enrollment for St. Paul Schools is declining and project to continue to decline in the next decade.

They are ignoring the reality that they already have a large budget shortfall for this year.

**The green open spaces of St. Paul Public Schools are critical to the health of our urban communities.**

As one of the largest property owners in our City, St. Paul Public Schools has multiple options for location on which to build or move a magnet school such as Linwood. They also have an important role as stewards of our landscapes and our health. Their approach to this property establishes a terrible precedent for ignoring the zoning codes that make our city livable. In

addition, their plan creates even more parking spaces than what is required – showing a fundamental lack of awareness about this importance of green space to our City and to the health of the children.

***The State Historic Hill District was established in 1974 to help protect the character of this neighborhood, and St. Paul Schools has made only minimal effort to protect this asset and the character of the neighborhood.***

Massing, scale, and size matter just as much as material, and this project is clearly out of scale with both historic practices and modern zoning.

St. Paul Public School's first plan created unnecessary curb cuts and a driveway, and eliminated around 70% of the playground. This revised plan eliminates a smock stack that is a significant historic feature of the property. Their initial design called for unsympathetic fenestration and materials choices. The final design creates a brutal ~52 foot tall wall along Oxford Avenue. Each of these choices shows a fundamental lack of awareness or respect for the neighborhood's character.

***There are no checks and balances on St. Paul Public School's building budgets.***

Unlike most school districts in Minnesota, SPPS is authorized to raise bonds and pass that debt on to the residents all on its own. Most school districts in Minnesota must present their building plans to the State Department of Education, which reviews them for cost, efficiencies, and compliance with state guidelines. (One of their guidelines is that school renovation projects should not exceed 50% of the cost of building a new building. Right now, the Linwood School project is estimated around \$20 million. Wayzata just built a brand new school building in 2015 for \$26 million.)

**The only people looking at the broader picture are you.**

As our City Council, you are concerned about public school students, but you also have a duty to balance those needs with the needs of the broader community. Zoning codes for height and lot coverage set reasonable rules for all of us to follow. Allowing these large variances will negatively impact the character of the neighborhood permanently. I urge you to reject this request for variances and encourage St. Paul Public Schools to return to the drawing board to create something that works for both the neighborhood and the school. There is no need for an either/or choice here – there is just a need for greater flexibility.

-Nancy O'Brien Wagner  
10xx Linwood Ave  
St. Paul, MN 55015

I oppose the requested variances. ISD 625 should bring the school up to date immediately but consistently with the existing rules, without changing the height or footprint.

Harry Walsh

April 18, 2017

Dear President Stark, and distinguished City Council Members,

I am writing to you with my opposition to, and serious concerns with, the Saint Paul Public Schools Major Variance Application for 1023 Osceola Avenue. This property sits kitty-corner to my own house at 1049 Linwood Avenue, and the proposed project will have serious visual, traffic, open space, and historic character impacts to not only my home, but to the dozens of residences in the direct visual vicinity, as well as to the larger Summit Hill neighborhood and residents.

I am particularly concerned with the BZA staff report findings and the subsequent approval of the variance requests by the BZA. While BZA members voted to support staff findings, these findings were completely one-sided and did not address ANY of the neighbor's concerns, and did not reference the many elements in Saint Paul's Comprehensive Plan in contradiction to the requested variance. Such an interpretation by the city staff was egregious, irresponsible, and showed an incredible bias against the detailed, documented, legitimate concerns raised by the neighborhood stakeholders in this process. It can only be concluded that the staff was directed by the Mayor's staff to produce a flimsy report that said as little as possible about neighborhood concerns addressed by the Comprehensive Plan.

I earnestly hope that the City Council will weigh the clear deficiencies present in this process, with the conclusions drawn both by the staff report and the BZA decision, and will vote to overrule these Major Variances for the Linwood School.

Such a ruling will be an appropriate step in bringing the SPPS staff to the table with the Summit Hill Association and concerned residents. By reversing the BZA decision, a new and collaborative proposal can come forward that adequately addresses the zoning ordinances while promoting the much needed improvements to the Linwood Elementary School.

Sincerely,

David O'Brien Wagner, AIA, LEED AP  
1049 Linwood Avenue  
Saint Paul, MN 55105

Please read! Outlined below are my concerns with the Staff report issued to the BZA:

In reviewing the BZA Staff Report, I have found significant issues with the report including items A, B and C, with the Findings 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6, with the statement G. Correspondence, and with item H. Staff Recommendation.

Below are my specific comments to the effect of each of these items:

A. PURPOSE

The report's stated purpose of the variance, while for construction of an addition, should also clearly indicate that there is no deficiency in the property that requires granting of these variance requests. It is clear that the Saint Paul Public Schools' desire to create space for 165 more students at this campus is their sole reason for asking for variances. All of the other improvements for ADA accessibility, for upgraded classrooms, and for the new cafeteria separate from the gym, can be achieved without variances.

While the variance application expresses the variance is for 17 feet, the staff report should note that the rules for measurement do not account for the fact that the true building height measured to the visual parapet is actually over 52 feet relative to the surrounding grade.

**B. SITE AREA AND CONDITIONS:**

The site area and conditions description is grossly misleading. Below is a more accurate account of the immediate conditions:

Directly to the west are two single-family residences on Oxford as well as a low-rise [15' high], low-income multi-household apartment building. Additionally the backyard views of 6 more residences are directly affected to the west for families on the south side of Fairmount between Oxford and Lexington.

Directly to the south are 7 single-family residences with direct visual impact plus the two [25' high] apartment buildings, each with multiple tenants visually impacted by the proposed expansion.

To the southwest are three more residences directly visually impacted by the school, including my house, which looks out to the school from four bedrooms and from our kitchen.

On a conservative count to the north and east over 25 homes are *directly* impacted by this proposal.

The total number of homes impacted should be stated based upon the 350 foot radius required by major variance notification standards. I'd like to know what this number is, and I think it should be provided to the members of the BZA.

**C. BACKGROUND:**

Saint Paul Public Schools has stated publicly that their FMP, an internally generated programming document, is the reason they are expanding enrollment at the Linwood property. By all zoning review standards it is clear that the variance request is driven only by their internal decision making, programming, and planning, and therefore the variance requests are not related to any specific limitations inherent to the property.

The improvements of designing for modern standards, learning needs, and ADA accessibility are not in and of themselves deficiencies of the property. Such a modern facility can be built, or the existing building remodeled without necessitating variances to the zoning ordinances. Expanded enrollment is the desired outcome requiring variances. Given the broad opportunity to utilize properties and resources across the district, and to purchase or not sell existing properties, SPPS is on their own, solely responsible for creating this condition.



It is clear that SPPS planning is limited to one decade, ten years, of planning. Their request while serving them for perhaps ten years, means a lifetime of impact on the neighborhood and surrounding residential homes.

E. FINDINGS:

*The variances are in harmony with the general purposes and intent of the zoning code.*

In reviewing this finding, it appears the only standard that addresses the condition of harmony relates to the applicant desiring a better learning environment allowing similar-aged peer groups together in one building. As I see there is nothing about the property that limits pre-k through 4<sup>th</sup> grade from existing at this property if SPPS so chose to do so. It is only the desired increase in the number of students [at the smallest property in the district] that creates a problem. Again, this is not an inherent deficiency in the property.

In my understanding of zoning, the question of harmony is not just an applicant consideration, but also needs to be reviewed, in fact primarily needs to be reviewed from the standpoint of impact upon the surrounding property owners, and what is in harmony with their structures and neighborhood. From this point of view the staff report and the applicant are silent.

Chapter 2.4 of the Comprehensive Plan is cited by the staff report, noting that the plan encourages the development of a strategy for investing in a broad range of infrastructure projects that support the growth of schools. True, investing in schools is important, but what else does the Comprehensive Plan say? According the staff report, apparently nothing else matters. Again staff and the applicant are silent about the impact on the neighborhood and individual property owners, and what the Comprehensive Plan has to say about that, for instance:

The Comprehensive Plan supports the Summit Hill District 16 Neighborhood Plan

The Summit Hill Plan Section 5.1 states “Neighborhood ambience is defined and enriched by a well-maintained green urban landscape..., and well-designed new and old buildings that reflect the character, mass and scale of nearby buildings.” Given that the majority of surrounding homes and apartment buildings are 25 in height, the proposed 47 feet of the applicant’s plan, right up to the west setback, would dwarf the surrounding neighbors.

Section 5.2 states that there “must be better enforcement of current zoning and building guidelines”. Everyone should be held to the same standards with city entities not getting a free pass.

Sections 5.3 through 5.6 advocate for “retention of neighborhood green spaces, such as parks, vegetated bluff areas, and undeveloped portions of properties”, “enhance use of existing public spaces and parks”

The resulting loss of green space, access to light and view, and increased hardcover beyond what is allowed by zoning will be a significant impact on this local neighborhood.

The playground is a community asset and is proposed to be cut by 40% in size. This impacts the residents as well as the students who will have a sub-standard playground that does not meet Minnesota Department of Education guidelines for outdoor playspace.

The proposed expansion decreases open space, and decreases the beauty and harmony of the neighborhood.

*The variance is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan*

The staff report refers to the part of the Comprehensive Plan recognizing that economic sustainability is driven by quality schools. The staff report is silent about the economic impact to the surrounding residences who will have their property values damaged by an oversized addition to this school versus an addition that is in keeping with zoning standards.

Unlike most other schools located within neighborhoods, there is not open enrollment for neighborhood children for the Linwood Elementary site. Our neighborhood children do not get to go to Linwood since it draws students only from across the District as an arts magnet. Typical economic benefit, does not apply to the neighbors surrounding Linwood. Again the staff report is silent on this point.

The staff report states that “the request to construct a building addition *large enough and tall enough* to accommodate *additional students*” is consistent with the vision of the Comprehensive Plan. A better learning environment can be had for Linwood, and is strongly supported by the neighbors. For the small size of the Linwood property additional students are a planning wish forced by broader decisions within the SPPS and their 10 year plan. What happens in 10 years as enrollment numbers drop [as they are projected to do], program plans change, and the desires of parents and administrators shift? We will be saddled with an oversized and potentially under-utilized building for the next 50 to 100 years. Again the staff report is silent, and does not reference other parts of the Comprehensive Plan that show this project is not consistent with its vision.

Once again, it is a desire to shift 165 students to this smallest of district sites that is the only salient issue surrounding the variance request. All of the educational standards, stated program needs, updates, ADA accessibility laws, cafeteria updates, separate performance spaces, can be met with a building addition that meets all the zoning ordinances.

There are no practical difficulties that are not of the applicant’s own making. The staff finding stating that conditions have been met are once again looked at only from the perspective of the applicant.

In fact, given other available properties under ownership by SPPS, it is wholly possible to construct an addition to such locations as their 5 acre [compared to Linwood’s 1.8 acres] Albion property 1.5 miles away, and which is currently for sale by SPPS. Tom Parent from SPPS stated that this option would be too expensive, but my understanding is that economic considerations “alone do not constitute practical difficulties”. Who knows what other development possibilities are out there to consider. It is my understanding that no other solutions have been explored with any real reports or fact-finding.

*The plight of the landowner is due to circumstances unique to the property not created by the landowner.*

The applicant has clearly created their own need with their proposed design. Currently this property functions as a school, and has for close to 100 years in this general configuration and within zoning ordinances. All of their modern educational needs can be met with additions and updates that conform with the zoning ordinances. Cramming an additional 165 spots at the smallest school site in the district does not constitute a circumstance that is unique to this property. Common sense clearly shows this condition has not been met.

6. *The variance will not alter the essential character of the surrounding area.*

The staff report breezes over this critical section of the findings. The character of the neighborhood, the overshadowing scale of this addition, its proximity to setback lines, and its overwhelming height in comparison to all the surrounding single family residences, these issues have been ignored.

Apart from the inappropriate scale of this proposal, there will also be a loss of sunlight to surrounding properties, loss of open space, loss of historic viewsheds [please note that neither the HPC nor the SHPO acknowledged this important historic landscape issue in their reports and recommendations], a significant increase to traffic and congestion, an increase in site hardcover, and a loss of recreation space critical to nearby residents.

Yet again, this report has utterly failed to even mention the impacts imparted to the surrounding residents. Apparently even though the city feels it is important to notify residents about significant variance requests within a 350 foot radius of a proposed project, it seems to feel that recognizing the concerns of said residents, even though they have been very vocal, does not need to be covered at all in the staff report.

Not one sentence in this report has acknowledged the surrounding residents and their legitimate opposition to this project as it has been currently planned. Not one sentence has been devoted to the fact that the neighborhood wholeheartedly supports and encourages the improvements to the school that are needed to bring it into modern compliance with standards. Not one sentence mentions that if the current student body size at this school was maintained at current numbers that none of these improvements would necessitate a variance.

#### G. CORRESPONDENCE:

It should be noted that of the 163 signatures in opposition to this variance request, all are residents in the Summit Hill District, with names and addresses provided. These signatures were the result of real residents talking with one another about the concerns of their neighborhood.

In contrast the 1100 petition signatures of support have come via an online petition promoted by websites such as the SPFT. This petition does not have any controls based on residency in the neighborhood, or even residency in the city of Saint Paul. To my knowledge no addresses have been provided for the signators to this petition. Such lack of information and transparency brings the validity of this petition into serious question.

This staff report does not address such questions and concerns.

Dear Council Members:

I oppose the variances being requested in regarding to the Linwood School project.

The project needs to be rethought in its entirety.

The proposed height and size of the building will grossly exceed what works for the space available.

The children need the playground space.

Please send this plan back for redesign.

Oppose the variances!

A.W. O'Brien  
6xx Goodrich Avenue  
St. Paul

Greetings,

I live within a block of the Linwood School; i.e. 1080 Fairmount. We love having this school as a part of our neighborhood. The diversity of the student body and joyful play of the children reflect a healthy community, and should be supported.

We appreciate the modifications made to the original plans for the school expansion. In particular, I believe the plans for the traffic flow and green spaces will now work for our neighborhood. I recognize that the project has received extremely vocal opposition from a few of my neighbors and that the voices of those of us who are in support of the project have been more subtle. I would like to formally express my support for this project and my appreciation for the careful consideration given to the neighborhood's concerns.

Regards,

Christy Hanson  
City Council

Re: Public hearing on variances for a project at 1023 Osceola – Linwood School

Dear Members of the Saint Paul City Council,

I am writing to ask that you vote to reverse the Board of Zoning Appeals decision to grant major size variances to a project plan for Linwood School which does not qualify under the City of Saint Paul zoning ordinance.

The vast majority of Linwood neighbors are opposed to granting zoning variances for an oversize building on the site. We support all of the repair and modernization needs of the school, but are opposed the decision to increase the student population from under 300 to near 500 by moving multiple grade

levels from the Monroe campus, which is three times the size and currently under its capacity as determined by the school district.

Placing such a massive building on the smallest elementary school campus in the whole SPPS school system will degrade the character of the neighborhood and permanently shrink the ball field and playground space on the north side of the school, depriving students and neighbors alike of that precious resource.

Our goal is to create a plan for Linwood that will satisfy the needs of the school community and the needs of the neighborhood. Let's work together to create that plan.

Thank you for your consideration. SuzanneFarrell 10xx Fairmount Ave St Paul

Dear city council

I have two major issues with the proposed project to significantly increase the schools size

First is the fact that the neighborhood the school is in does not have any additional green space in the close vicinity. Substantially reducing or eliminating the grass field area will have a significant negative impact on the neighborhood. That area is used constantly.

My second area of concern is why increase the size of Linwood school already on a small parcel of land when there are other schools siting either vacant or under utilized. This does not make any sense to me.

I would like the council to reverse bza's decision to grant major size variances.

I believe if this project goes through as is my home value as well as my neighbors will be adversely affected. I also believe the quality of life families have in this neighborhood will be negatively affected as well due to less green pace in a neighborhood already very low with it.

Thank you for listening to my concerns.

Chris law.

Father, Resident and taxpayer at 10xx Fairmount avenue. 55105

I am a parent of an SPPS student and I am a neighbor of the Linwood School and Ward 2 resident. I request that the zoning variance request and appeal for the proposed Linwood Lower school (1023 Osceola Avenue) be denied

The current and future students of Linwood School (in any form) deserve more. They deserve a fully ADA compliant school building with sufficient indoor and outdoor space for the number of children. The indoor space should be comfortable and designed for the appropriate usage and number of students. The outdoor space should also be comfortable and designed for the appropriate usage and number of children. The children of an Arts magnet deserve to have indoor facilities to perform and practice. They also need to have outdoor space to perform and practice.

As a parent and neighbor hearing that the outdoor space will be reduced saddens me. When I happen by the school on a normal day the school children use and fill the current outdoor space, to reduce it would be a mistake that can't be undone.

This ill suited project does not meet a common sense standard of how we should be utilizing the limited budget of the SPPS. I am familiar with Adams school and if you drive by the Adams it is clear there is room for expansion while maintaining adequate green space. When I drive by Monroe school I see a huge building and a large outdoor space available for those children, again an appropriate common sense decision. When I drive past Linwood I see a small building with limited outdoor space that is being fully utilized at recess. A plan to increase the student population at the Linwood location and decrease the outdoor space is not appropriate.

Thank you for serving the public and please consider denying the variance and ensuring that the SPPS provides all children with access to high quality environments.

Emily McMahon  
8xx Osceola Avenue

City Council members,

It is time to be creative as you think about expanding Linwood School. We (meaning anyone - students, citizens) do not need more concrete and the shade that results from height. We need more green space, places to run, discover nature, be calm. Research into learning supports this - children do better when they have time outdoors discovering and playing.

Also, it would be good to consider the projections for school populations which have just been revised downward.

You already own an empty property on Lexington and West Seventh Street. It has an existing building and lots of play area. It is always less expensive to remodel and add to an existing building. Why not use it for the preschool or for whatever seems best. Keep the space flexible so that its use can be changed as needs change.

Please do what is best for the environment, the citizens, the students. Be open to other ideas and not rigid. Too often when people propose alternatives they are given the cold shoulder - "experts" know best. That is not necessarily true. Be flexible. Be considerate of all who are interested in the issues.

Sincerely,  
Ruth M. Lippin

St. Paul City Council Members

Please reverse the BZA's decision to grant the variances for Linwood School. The St. Paul School board is presenting this proposed addition to the Linwood School as a minor change and are requesting two zoning variances to allow it. However they are attempting to turn a small neighborhood school into major city school on not just a small parcel of land (1/3 of a city block) but on the smallest elementary property in the St. Paul school system. This shoehorning of a much larger school into this tight space is not good for either the school children or the neighborhood. The playground/park area fronting Fairmount Avenue is very important to both the children and the neighborhood and should not be decimated.

The additional traffic would be more than the neighborhood can manage. They are proposing to load numerous buses on two narrow side street. The parking lot which is listed now as 6 spots they are proposing to increase by very few spaces. Where are the other teachers, administrators, support staff and parents supposed to park their cars? Clearly this is way too large a project for the space if they cannot find adequate parking on the property.

Linwood School needs updating and improving. We are all in agreement about this. It is the size of the project that is completely out of proportion with the site. In the 40 years that I have owned property at 1042 Fairmount at the corner of Oxford, the neighborhood has maintained its historic character and is now in the Historic Hill District Area. The school board should be searching for an alternate site for this much larger school while they are doing the necessary improvements to Linwood to make it ADA-compliant and updating the school.

Lastly when the St. Paul schools have experienced a drop of 1000 students in 2 years, and losses of over 2000 students are anticipated in the future, why is the St. Paul School Board planning such a large addition to Linwood School. Please reverse the BZA's decision to grant the variances for Linwood School.

Thank you for your consideration.

Barbara Freeman

10xx Fairmount Ave,

St Paul

St. Paul City Council Members

Please reverse the BZA's decision to grant the variances for Linwood School. The St. Paul School board is presenting this proposed addition to the Linwood School as a minor change and are requesting two zoning variances to allow it. However they are attempting to turn a small neighborhood school into major city school on not just a small parcel of land (1/3 of a city block) but on the smallest elementary property in the St. Paul school system. This shoehorning of a much larger school into this tight space is not good for either the school children or the neighborhood. The playground/park area fronting Fairmount Avenue is very important to both the children and the neighborhood and should not be decimated.

The additional traffic would be more than the neighborhood can manage. They are proposing to load numerous buses on two narrow side street. The parking lot which is listed now as 6 spots they are proposing to increase by very few spaces. Where are the other teachers, administrators, support staff and parents supposed to park their cars? Clearly this is way too large a project for the space if they cannot find adequate parking on the property.

Linwood School needs updating and improving. We are all in agreement about this. It is the size of the project that is completely out of proportion with the site. In the 40 years that I have owned property at

1042 Fairmount at the corner of Oxford, the neighborhood has maintained its historic character and is now in the Historic Hill District Area. The school board should be searching for an alternate site for this much larger school while they are doing the necessary improvements to Linwood to make it ADA-compliant and updating the school.

Lastly when the St. Paul schools have experienced a drop of 1000 students in 2 years, and losses of over 2000 students are anticipated in the future, why is the St. Paul School Board planning such a large addition to Linwood School. Please reverse the BZA's decision to grant the variances for Linwood School.

Thank you for your consideration.

Patrick Freeman

10xx Fairmount Ave,

St Paul

Dear City Council Members,

I am writing today to request a reversal of the BZA's earlier decision to grant the variances with respect to the proposed expansion at Linwood Monroe Arts Elementary School. As a 30 year homeowner and neighbor of this school (I live directly across the street on Fairmount Avenue). I have long admired the arts-focused mission of the school. Over the years I have attended their programs and performances. I have spoken to many students, teachers and past principals and have always considered the Linwood school to be an asset to the neighborhood. In this spirit, I am in favor of improvements that will accommodate all students and enhance their educational experience.

We are, however, a neighborhood and, indeed, a city that value our historic character. The Linwood building is among many schools built in the 1920s and 1930s that have similar distinctive characters. In preserving the historic nature of our neighborhood, it would seem prudent to adhere to a design that would respect the style of the existing building and the scale of other buildings in the neighborhood. An example of an expansion that admirably incorporated these principles is Farnsworth Aerospace Elementary School on Arcade Street. Many others, however, have resulted in design hodgepodes, at odds with the original structures. My hope is that with the reversal of the variances, an effort will be made to create a design that not only is sympathetic to the original character of the building but also in harmony with the historic character of the neighborhood.

I thank everyone for their careful consideration of this matter.

Respectfully,

Susan Ruth Thompson  
10xx Fairmount Avenue  
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55105



Dear City Council Members,

I am writing to you today to ask you to reverse the BZA's decision to grant the variances for the Linwood school expansion.

My wife and I have been completely for the kids. We are fully behind making improvement to the Linwood Lower school campus. The kids deserve the classrooms and school being renovated and updated to ADA standards, building a cafeteria, a separate Gym, updated heating and cooling systems. However their current plan is still too big and way too tall for the lot size.

We have lived across the street from Linwood school at 1037 Fairmount Ave for 30+ years and the neighborhood children, school children, myself, wife, daughters and now my granddaughters have enjoyed the playground and ball field immensely.

The proposed expansion will cut the green space / playground by 50%.

The children in the neighborhood and at the school will no longer have a ball field on which to play baseball, softball, and soccer. (The proposed EAU Soccer field is a legal field for up to 2nd graders) The expansion will also disrupt the established harmony and essential character of our neighborhood. It will also directly impact our direct and indirect sun light, especially during the winter months. With only a 9 foot set back on the west side and a building height of 50 to 55 feet on the north and west walls the houses to the north and west will be in shade 40 to 50% of the day during the winter months.

Let me make this clear. I am totally in favor of Linwood school lower campus remodeling to meeting ADA standards, expanding to give the kids a separate gym, cafeteria and essential learning environment, however I am against this large of an expansion for the following reasons:

1. The SHA sent their recommendations to the BZA to deny the Variances with an 11 to 1 vote because the Proposed expansion plans did not meet 4 of the six requirements of the BZA for a variance to be granted.

2. The current school's foot print is 23,332 square feet or 28% of the existing lot. With the proposed expansion increasing the foot print to 32,109 square feet or 39.5% of the lot. Code is a max of 28,451 square feet or 35% of the lot which is a variance of 3,658 square feet or 4.5%.

Referring to the second request (This is the Largest point) regarding the building's height, code currently is 30 feet. The proposal wants to match the existing (too tall) 47 feet on the south side of the building. However they are not allowing for the slope of the lot to the north which you can see on their side drawing of about 8 to 10+ feet. This would raise the south side of the school to 57+ feet or a 90% increase above current code.

This project exceeds the reasonable height expansion on a very small lot (the smallest elementary school lot in the whole SPPS school system) and is way out of character of the existing building and neighborhood.

3. No other site was considered. The current Linwood school site consists of 1/3 of a city block while their secondary school, Monroe sits on a 2 city block lot and occupies less than 40% of the space.

4. The proposal seeks to increase the Linwood student population from 300 to 450. This will create an even greater problem with traffic congestion on our narrow streets.

5. The price tag is too high! 24+ Million!! With current enrollment going down in all public schools and Monroe not being close to capacity.

6 The existing open space/playground to the north of the school will be reduced by 50+%. Children need a playground to run, play baseball, softball and socialize.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Lloyd G Fjare

Dear City Council Members,

I am writing to you today to request you reverse the BZA's decision to grant the Linwood schools variances for expansion.

My wife and I are for the school renovating and building a Gym, Cafeteria, ADA upgrades and an upgraded learning environment however the proposed expansion is way to big for the small lot space and will be way out of character with the existing building and neighborhood homes.

No neighbor input has been considered and their drawings are from different set back angles.

So I measured from the front step/porch of the house on Oxford to the lot line and it was 67 feet then added 9 foot (set back of the west side of the school) for a total of 76 feet. The first picture is of the current view and the second picture is 76 feet back from the existing 3 story part of the front of the school. (Proposed variance to match height of front of school)

76 feet is approximately 35 to 36 paces.

So if you could please pace off 35 to 36 paces from your front porch and then try to imagine a 55 to 57+ foot building (47 feet height + the 9 to 10 foot slope downward to the north) being built across from your home.

Would you be OK with it??

I invite you to our neighborhood and try to imagine the existing playground being cut back by 50%. The proposed expansion will be slightly short of the north second swing set upright going east across most of the existing playground.

Please come and take a look!!

Sincerely,

Lloyd G Fjare

To: St. Paul City Council

From: Sara Wolff, 961 Osceola Avenue

Re: Please oppose the Linwood School Variances

April 18, 2017

Dear Councilmember Noecker and members of the St. Paul City Council:

Thank you for the time and careful consideration you are giving to the Linwood School expansion issue. It is really important to our neighborhood and the children who will be attending Linwood School into the future.

As a taxpayer and neighbor, I completely support making significant investments in Linwood School. It is long overdue; our children and their teachers deserve it.

But neither the neighbors nor the children deserve a better school building at the expense of an outdoor space that is not large enough for the free play, running, throwing, kicking balls, games and the social interaction that is so beneficial to growing minds and bodies.

As I look at the space in back of Linwood School, I see a playground that is small but perfect: it fosters play among green field and equipment, allows for either interaction or space between children of all ages and the adults who watch them. Teens and adults can play baseball or football or soccer or tag while siblings swing or ride a bike or play group games on the monkey bars.

I hope you've had a chance to visit the playground behind Linwood School. I hope you have seen the pictures of our neighbors (attached), standing where the proposed expansion extends. It is not hard to see: the proposed plan takes too much. It takes too much open space, too much green space, too much sun.

It isn't fair to the neighbors, especially those who will be in the shadow of this building. And it isn't fair to the children who attend Linwood School. Particularly when many of these children may not have frequent access to other open and green spaces for play.

An expansion this size would not be problem on almost any other St. Paul Public Schools site. But here, where the playground is already so small, a 40% reduction irreparably degrades this space.

I'm continuing to learn this lesson as I go through life: **margins matter**.

Sometimes it seems like if you can take a few dollars or minutes or inches, taking a few more won't matter. But it does.

My children grew up on that playground – interacting with friends, neighbors, kids they had never met before and perhaps wouldn't meet otherwise in the course of their daily lives. They did that because it was a park where everyone came, and everyone was included.

Years ago, my then five-year-old son was so enamored with the teens playing football in the field that he overcame his shyness to ask if he could join them – and those teens welcomed him! And in the years since, many young children have watched my growing son with fascination as he shoots baskets. He always asks the younger children if they want to play, too.

My kids continue to use the park almost daily. If the expansion happens, they won't – simply because the space will not accommodate their interests and larger bodies. My kids will have other places to play – they go to schools with expansive fields and grounds. Not all children will be able to say the same thing. Particularly the children at Linwood School.

Just because St. Paul Public Schools came up with this plan does not mean it is a good one. It is not.

I really support smart upgrades to Linwood School. All of which can be accomplished without sacrificing the outdoor space the children of Linwood need so much.

I ask you to oppose the expansion of Linwood School.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Sara Wolff  
9xx Osceola Avenue

Attached: Please see

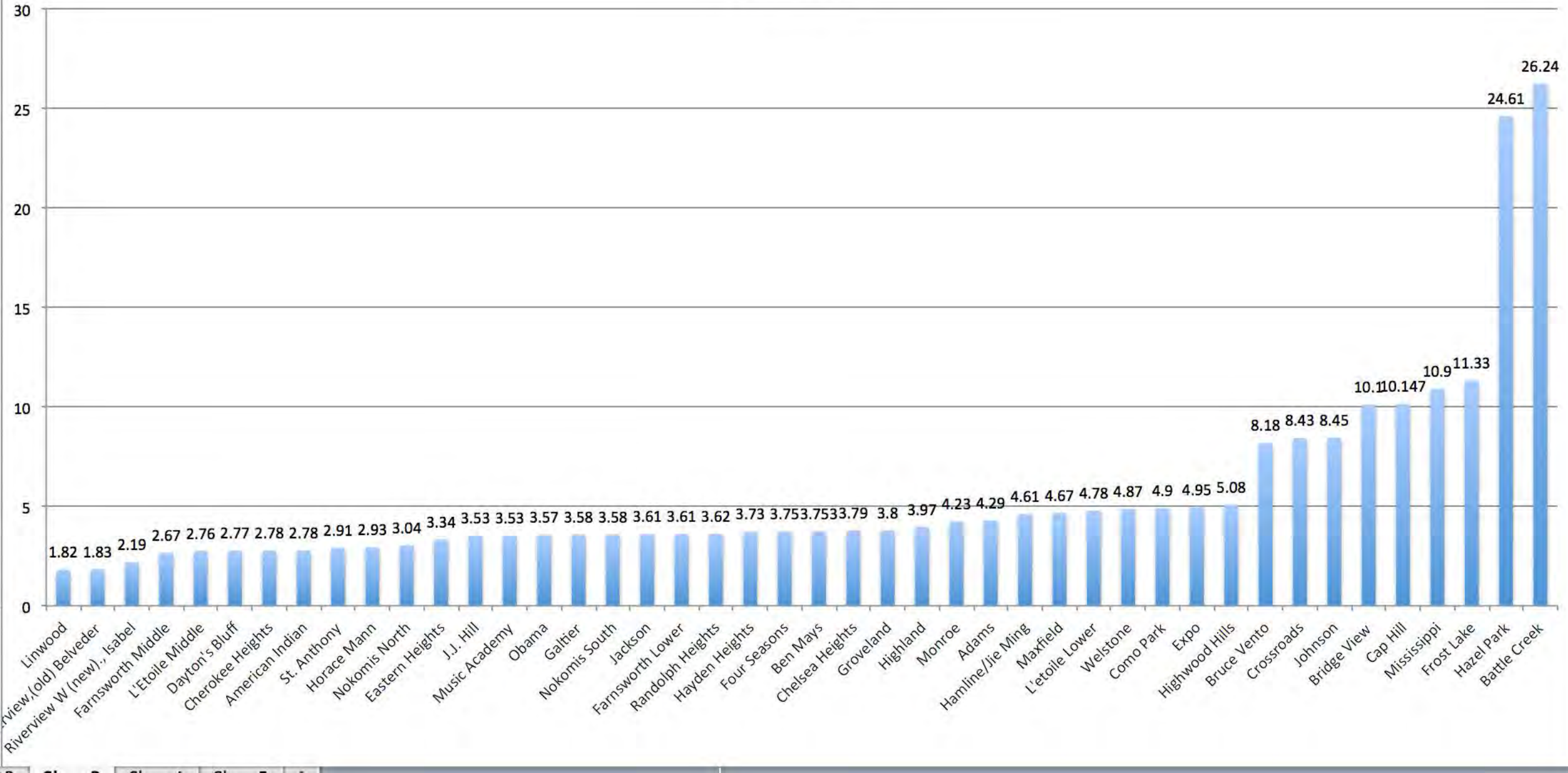
- 1) The graph that shows Linwood School with the smallest acreage of any St. Paul Public School. With this expansion, Linwood is proposing to increase enrollment from 287 to 450 students.
- 2) A graph that compares school acreage with student populations among St. Paul Public Schools.
- 3) Images 1,4,7 and 9 showing the proposed expansion outlined by neighbors holding yellow tape.







## SPPS Elementary Schools by Acreage

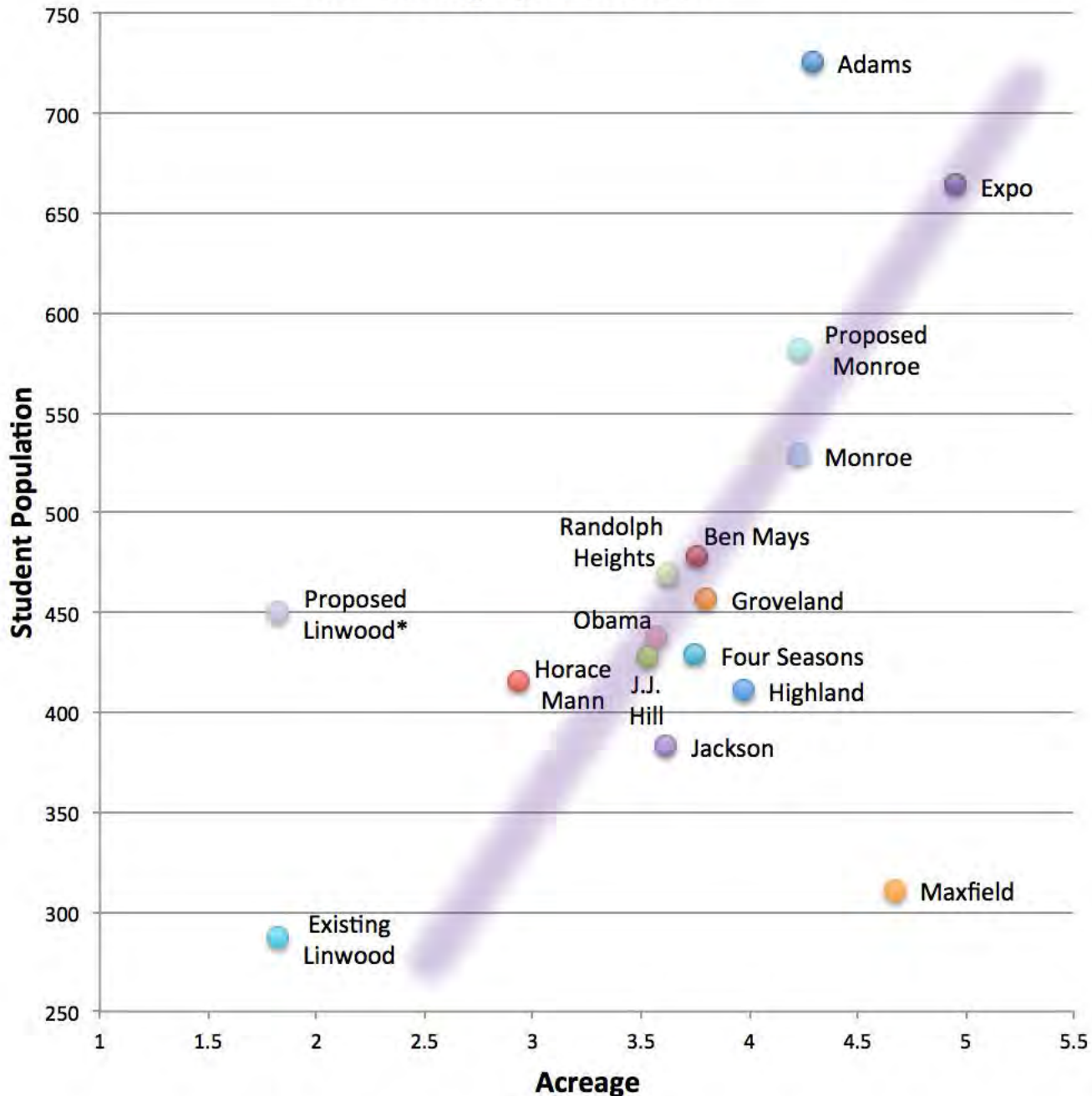








# Area F Elementary Schools Site Acreage per Student



**Note: Ben Mays sf was calculated proportionatly from shared site with Cap Hill.**

**Cap Hill and Bridgeview excluded as outliers.**

**April 16 version - corrected to show accurate population for proposed Linwood.**











