

St. Paul City Council (e-mail)
City Hall

September 6, 2017

Honorable Ladies and Gentlemen:

It has just come to my attention that the campaign against me, my property, and my tenants is continuing, this time in the form of letters some neighbors have written to ask the City Council to deny my appeal of the Notice to Vacate.

Their letters are so filled with false allegations, unjustified assumptions, and just plain libel that I feel obliged to answer for the record.

I will address the most egregious items:

Allegation 1: Very little progress has been made on the deficiencies listed in the recent Certificate of Occupancy inspection.

Allegation 1 is false. All deficiencies in Inspector Shaff's list were addressed by the Council's deadline. As part of the appeal process, DSI sent out another team of inspectors who noted some additional deficiencies. Many of those have been remedied already, well before the deadline.

Allegation 2: The building is in increasing disrepair.

Allegation 2 is false. The building has been dramatically improved. On separate documents we list many of our recent repairs and improvements, as well as some of our plans for the future.

Allegation 3: The owner failed to get the necessary permits at the proper times.

Allegation 3 is false. We needed a remodeling permit to install some sheet rock in the basement; a roofing permit to re-roof the portico; and a plumbing permit to cap a gas line to a clothes dryer we removed. We got all the permits before the work started and had final inspections done as soon as possible after the work was completed. We did not need an electrical permit because there were no deficiencies that required one. There have been no inspector complaints about the permits.

Allegation 4: "Blatant drug-related activity continues."

Assertion 4 is not only false but libelous. There is zero drug-related activity on the premises, and there has been none since the problem tenants were evicted in February/March.

A curious fact, perhaps relevant, is that the letter-writers vigorously deny that there is any racism in their complaint, but the tenants about whom they complain are all minorities – the Mexican-American problem tenants and the black law student. I suspect the "blatant drug-dealing" they claim to observe is simply the black law student going about his family routine. He comes and goes a lot. Sadly, some people see a young black male and assume he must be a drug dealer.

We are working closely with DSI as we continue to bring the building back to its highest and best use. 705 Summit is an historically important building that I cherish. I have done tens of thousands of dollars in improvements over the years and intend to continue to maintain and improve it.