

City of Saint Paul
Legislative Hearing August 28, 2018
Remove/Repair Order RLH RR 18-32 (522-524 Otis Ave)

My name is Beth Camilleri,
I have lived at 512 Otis Ave in Desnoyer Park for over 25 years.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts regarding deteriorating properties in Desnoyer Park. While the subject of this hearing is the property at 522/524 Otis Ave, my comments apply to all of the properties owned by this landlord that are in a state of dis-repair. I think everyone in this room is aware that there are several in this category.

I support having rental properties in Desnoyer Park.
The diversity in housing in our neighborhood, be it large or small, single- or multi-family, owned or rented benefits all residents.

I support renters' right to live in a home deemed habitable by the city.
Over the years we have had many positive connections with the renters in these properties and they deserve better than to live in housing that deteriorates to the point of being unsafe.

My goal today is to support the efforts of my neighbors and the City of Saint Paul to get these homes repaired, maintained, and inhabited. My home was built in the early 1950's by the late Arnold Olson and is an example that these properties are quality structures given regular maintenance.

I am disappointed that it takes a multi-year effort by many neighbors as well as threats of demolition to get a property owner to act. However, thanks to the dedication of many of the people in this room, I believe we have reached a tipping point and positive things are happening. The system is working!

I appreciate the recent efforts on the property at 521/523 Desnoyer; the view from my backyard is much improved and there are signs of life at the property. I ask that these efforts continue - without a required intervention by the City of Saint Paul. However, if this type of intervention is the only way to make progress, I am resolved to continue working through this system until all of these properties are repaired, maintained, and inhabited.

I do this because Desnoyer Park is a special place. It is a wonderful example of a livable urban neighborhood. Desnoyer Park has been this for me and I would like it to continue to be this for those who come after me.