

From: Eric Wong [<mailto:wonge02@gmail.com>]

Sent: Sunday, October 21, 2018 5:33 PM

To: #CI-StPaul_Ward3

Subject: Pedro Park Office Space

Dear Councilman Tolbert,

Downtown residents need additional Park and Recreation space and amenities. Business leaders need more creative, class A, office space. Must one be sacrificed to promote the other? Of course not. Yet, that is what selling the Police Annex Building will do.

Are there affordable & executable alternatives to park expansion outside the city-owned Annex building? No.

Are there viable alternatives for creative, class A, office space? Yes.

Business leaders can find creative, class A office space at 370 Osborn, 428 Minnesota, or Treasure Island Center to name a few. Renovation opportunities exist in the 15-20% vacant office spaces downtown. City led new construction developments facing the riverfront or at Central Station are also opportunities to fill this demand without sabotaging existing city plans to bring more parkland to downtown residents, visitors, and workers. Do we really need to reduce property values Downtown any further?

Per the Comprehensive Plan and Donation Agreement with the Pedro family, the Police Annex Building is designated parkland meant to serve the residential Fitzgerald Park neighborhood surrounding it.

We can have our cake and eat too only if we keep the Annex Building.

Sincerely,

Eric Wong

From: Ben Hatchett [<mailto:ben.hatchett@gmail.com>]
Sent: Friday, October 19, 2018 9:37 PM
To: #CI-StPaul_Ward3
Subject: HRA and Police Annex

Dear Council Member Tolbert,

I'm deeply concerned about the power Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) has to sell community assets meant to stay as community assets per the Comprehensive Plan.

I'm deeply concerned about the HRA's willingness to break contractual agreements and past promises.

Selling the Annex Building despite it's clear protection as parkland under the [Comprehensive Plan](#) and [Donation Agreement](#) with the Pedro Family is an abuse of power and hurts our democracy.

Let's work to close these loopholes to prevent communities from being sabotaged with 11th hour plans forged behind closed doors.

Please vote no to selling the Police Annex Building.

Sincerely,

Ben

From: [Jake Reilly](#)
To: [#CI-StPaul_Ward6](#); [#CI-StPaul_Ward2](#); [#CI-StPaul_Ward3](#)
Cc: [Renstrom, Scott \(CI-StPaul\)](#); [Maki, Taina \(CI-StPaul\)](#); office@capitolrivercouncil.org; [Sheldon, Tina \(CI-StPaul\)](#)
Subject: Public Safety Annex/Pedro Park hearing today
Date: Wednesday, October 24, 2018 12:31:59 PM
Attachments: [2018-10-08 Pedro Park Alternative.docx](#)

Dear HRA Board members and City Council members,

I am writing today to support HRA Board Member and Ward 2 Council Member Rebecca Noecker's alternative for the Public Safety Annex/Pedro Park site (attached). I have written you about this issue in the past.

As a resident of Saint Paul and a person who works in Downtown Saint Paul, in an office just down the street from the property in question, I think it would be unconscionable to allow the project as proposed by the Ackerberg group to go forward.

First, the current proposal and project is in violation of the City's own Comprehensive Planning documents. The board report improperly cites the Fitzgerald Park Precinct Plan. That language is there to protect the city from lawsuits alleging a "taking" when describing a certain area as proposed for a new use. This is common practice, especially in risk-averse cities like Saint Paul. In stating that this much smaller, privately held; publicly used space is aligned with the spirit and intent of the Plan, the board report falls afoul of the plan and effectively ignores the neighborhood's stated desires, erasing the stated opinions of residents and users of the area. This does not demonstrate that the HRA Board or the City Council are acting in the best interests of their constituents or allowing government to be held accountable to its electorate.

Second, the current proposal is not a good use of taxpayer dollars. The alternative is more fiscally sound; more representative of the stated goals of the plan and the desires of the community members who asked for it; and clearly holds up the city/HRA's legal obligations to the Pedro family who donated the land to be used for public open space. And, the last thing Saint Paul needs is more vacant office space. Saint Paul has a chronic vacancy issue with office space. We either need to make ALL office space appealing so that we don't end up with more situations like Cray, or focus on a different aspect of the market. I am tired of Saint Paul being the farm team for the coffers of Bloomington, Woodbury, and Maplewood, among others.

Third, and finally, I am left with a lot of questions that good stewards of the public good should ask you to clearly state for them today, based on the board report and the previous board reports and actions dating back to 2017. These questions include:

What are these 150+ permanent jobs? Are they from another part of the city? Are they from another City? If they are not 150+ NET NEW jobs, then is it really worth it?

What are the development costs? What are Ackerberg Group's sources and uses of the \$8M to which they claim to have access in order to bankroll this development?

What is stopping them from applying for other City or HRA funds to facilitate the development of this site, including TIF, which would remove any value added to the tax capacity from the general fund for at least 10 years, if not more.

Please also see comments available from the [Capital River Council's Web site in support of these comments.](#)

Thank you for your time. I trust you will make the right decision today to further investigate Board member Noecker's proposal and hold a public hearing on that proposal in the very near future.

Sincerely,
Jake Reilly
Ward 6 resident
Ward 2 employee

Pedro Park

Background

In 2006, the City worked with downtown residents to develop a Fitzgerald Park Precinct Plan. The Plan was designed with a “park at the heart” of the growing residential neighborhood, on the block bounded by 10th Street, Minnesota Street, Robert Street, and 9th Street.



A new “park at the heart.”

Fitzgerald Park Precinct Plan, August 2010

In 2009, the family of Carl Pedro, who started Pedro Luggage, donated the site of their business to the City, with the provision that it become a park. It marked the first portion of the site of the proposed full block park, which includes the Public Safety Annex and Union Gospel Mission, as well as surface parking lots.

Many residents in the neighborhood, as well as the CapitolRiver District Council, strongly oppose the redevelopment of the Public Safety Annex on 10th Street because it effectively extinguishes the possibility for a full block park on the site.

Alternative to Public Safety Annex Redevelopment

The Mayor’s proposal is to develop a \$3.83M quarter block park (.45 acres), in the area donated by the Pedro family adjacent to the Public Safety Annex. It uses the sale of the building at \$1.4M, \$2.23M in CIB bond sales, and \$200K in parkland dedication funds to fund the design, construction and remediation of the site. It assumes annual operating costs of \$40K.

For 60% of those costs, the City could ensure a park of twice the size (.85 acres), a better solution in a time of budget constraints. Using the same funding mechanisms, less the sale of the building -- \$2.23M in CIB bond sales and \$200K in parkland dedication funds – the City could demolish the Public Safety Annex, sod the existing quarter block park and the site of the Public Safety Annex, and maintain the park for 10 years while other funds are being sought.

This alternative preserves a large portion of the north side of the block for future development of a full block park and also provides what the neighborhood desires – a place for children to play and neighbors to gather. Neighbors have indicated interest in contributing to the park – with trees, benches, etc.



Mayor's Proposal
 Redevelop PSA and improve
 1/4 block part (.45 acre)

Alternative Proposal
 Tear down PSA & Sod PSA
 site and existing park-owned
 land (.85 acre)

City Project Sources		
Sale of PSA	\$1,400,000.00	\$0.00
Park Dedication Fee	3,230.00	0.00
CIB Bond Sales	2,230,000.00	2,230,000.00
Park Dedication Fund	200,000.00	200,000.00
Total Sources	\$3,833,230.00	\$2,430,000.00

City Project Expenses		
PSA holding costs to September 2018	\$50,000.00	\$50,000.00
Building environmental (est.)	\$0.00	\$140,000.00
Building demolition	\$0.00	\$260,000.00
Park design, construction, and soil testing & remediation	\$3,780,000.00	\$1,562,486.00
Acquisition	\$0.00	\$0.00
Relocation	\$0.00	\$0.00
Alley construction	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total Expenses	\$3,830,000.00	\$2,012,486.00

Ongoing Revenues		
Property tax revenue increase - city portion	\$56,000.00	\$0.00
Park operation annual contribution (20 years)	\$40,000.00	\$0.00
Total Ongoing Revenues	\$96,000.00	\$0.00

Ongoing costs (annual)		
Property tax reduction - city portion	\$0.00	\$0.00
Building annual operating expenses	\$0.00	\$0.00
Park annual operating expenses	\$40,000.00	\$40,000.00
Total Ongoing costs	\$40,000.00	\$40,000.00