

Burger, Kathryn (CI-StPaul)

From: Andy Flamm <andy@cedarprinting.com>
Sent: Monday, June 3, 2019 4:33 PM
To: *CI-StPaul_Contact-Council
Subject: RES PH 19-162, Skyway Hours Exception Request, 325 Cedar St.

Honorable Members of the Saint Paul City Council,

The Skyway Governance Advisory Committee (SGAC), which I chair, was created by the City Council to listen to the concerns of skyway stakeholders and recommend solutions for your consideration.

The SGAC considered the original skyway hours exception request from Bill Bratzke of Madison Equities at our monthly meeting on July 27, 2018. At that time, we were told that asbestos abatement would take up to one year and that skyways would only be closed during the time period when the skyway level and the levels immediately above and below it were being worked on. We expressed concern about the effects of such a lengthy closure on other businesses, particularly the Intercontinental Hotel, and we were told that efforts would be made to minimize closures, especially during the winter months. Furthermore, we asked Mr Bratzke to post detour signage to assist skyway users, including those in wheelchairs, in getting to the hotel and other destinations.

We passed a motion stating the following:

> Motion...to recommend that the City explore all options to minimize the time of closure of the skyway easement through the Degree of Honor building that connects skyway bridges #46 and #33, and attempt to re-open before the winter months, and that there be clear detour signs, including ADA accessible routes. Motion passed.

We were therefore shocked to recently learn that very little abatement has been done over the past 10 months, apparently because the building ownership simply decided to put resources elsewhere, and that no effort had been made to reopen the skyways during that time. In addition, there did not appear to be any attempt to provide detour signage as we requested. This looks like a gross act of negligence which has harmed skyway users and the businesses who depend on them, and, frankly, feels like a slap in the face for those of us working to make Downtown Saint Paul more user and business friendly.

At our April 26, 2019 monthly meeting we were asked to recommend a new hours request so the abatement and construction that should have been done by now can be completed. Unfortunately, we have little choice but to go along with this request, as any alternative would not result in opening the skyways up sooner. However, we rejected the request to recommend a year-long hours exception and instead approved the following:

> Motion... that the committee recommends to extend the hours exception through asbestos abatement or August 31, 2019 at the latest. Motion passed.

Shortly thereafter, it was suggested that the hours exception extend through November so skyway construction could be completed and no further skyway closure would be required. As that seemed like the best option, we agreed at our May 24, 2019 monthly meeting to recommend an hours exception through December 1, 2019. However, we also recommended that there be consequences should the project not be completed on schedule this time around, including that a temporary throughway be constructed to allow skyway passage throughout the winter. Furthermore, we once again recommended that adequate detour signage be posted.

The text of our May recommendations will be supplied to you shortly, and the SGAC appreciates your consideration of the concerns we have heard from skyway users, businesses and other stakeholders.

Sincerely,

Andy Flamm
Chair, SGAC

Owner and General Manager / Cedar Printing

651-293-3904 / www.CedarPrinting.com

Securian Center, Skyway Level / 401 Robert Street N, Suite 211 / Saint Paul, MN 55101