

Council Members,

I am opposed to any expansion and the necessary variances required by TCGIS.

The problems have been caused by the owners themselves. For example the reason they need a parking variance is because they have already closed the alley and built over the previous parking lot.

I have lived across the street from the school for the last 28 years and have never had an issue with any other version of the school before TGIS.

They are already too large for the footprint of their lot and compatibility with the rest of the neighborhood.

Tim Bleed
1019 Van Slyke Ave.
St Paul MN 55103

From: Pearce, Tucker A [<mailto:tucker.pearce@usbank.com>]

Sent: Monday, June 3, 2019 11:54 AM

To: Brendmoen, Amy (CI-StPaul) <amy.brendmoen@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; Kim, Hwa Jeong (CI-StPaul) <Hwa.Jeong.Kim@ci.stpaul.mn.us>

Cc: Kristen Pearce; Tucker Pearce

Subject: One last thought from a TCGIS Parent. Please read if you have time, Thanks!

Hi Amy,

I wanted to reach out as a TCGIS parent and former St. Paul resident and thank you for your hard work and dedication. My wife Kristen and I lived in St. Paul for 8 years and love the city. Our son enrolled in Kindergarten at TCGIS 6 years ago, he finishing up 5th grade in the next couple of weeks and we couldn't be happier with the education he has received.

We left St. Paul four years ago because we wanted more room for our growing family but St. Paul will always have a special place in our hearts. We chose to keep our son at TCGIS when we moved because of the excellent immersion experience, the amazing teachers and staff and a high level of extra attention for our son who was diagnosed with ADHD receives there. From what I have read SHSA tries to come across as a group that cares about the students but I think it's clear through their post below and other e-mails and posts that they are only concerned with saving the building.

As parents, many who live in St. Paul, we care about education first. We believe these young kids are our future and any tools we can give them to be successful are priority number one. The church is beautiful and that is one reason I first loved this new site but over the years it has proven that the Aula is not a good space for a gym or a cafeteria. These kids and their teachers deserve the best we can give them. As you know TCGIS was established in 2005 so unlike what some from SHSA post on their Facebook group this school isn't going anywhere. It's a charter school but charter schools along with the education in general are one of the many things that make Minnesota such a wonderful state to live in. Like every other school in America there are good and bad days at TCGIS. SHSA recently shared a video

they took at our School Board Meeting trying to show a divide at our school. In reality what they captured and then shared on YouTube was passionate teachers and parents who care deeply for this school. These meetings are where parents feel comfortable providing their feedback, feedback the school uses to improve the school year after year. If the type of passion I see in my son's teachers and the staff at TCGIS isn't a clear example of what we should value in St. Paul I am not sure what is. We love TCGIS so much that we are sending our daughter there for kindergarten next year.

As someone who served on the Parks Commission and Planning Commission in Lake Elmo I know you have a difficult job and I have a great respect for what you do. I hope you will see the vision TCGIS has and know that although SHSA may paint us as the bad guys we do care deeply about St. Paul, the neighborhood and the school. We just want what is best for the kids, again not to be cheesy but they are our future. I value history and preservation but at times we need to look at what is more important for all and in this case it's building a better TCGIS on the current site.

Thanks for your time and consideration!

-Tucker

Tucker Pearce, CSM, CPPM

Recent Facebook Post:

For those who are interested, here is a copy of the letter that we sent to CM Brendmoen about why we believed asking a mediator to do an "assessment" would do nothing to resolve the dispute. We told her that what was needed was for her to create the conditions that would require the school to collaborate on a solution.

Sadly, we have still received no response or even an acknowledgement of the concerns we raised.

#####

From: Save Historic St. Andrew's <savehistoricsaintandrews@gmail.com>
Date: Mon, May 27, 2019 at 7:46 PM
Subject: Re: ADR Contact
To: Brendmoen, Amy (CI-StPaul) <amy.brendmoen@ci.stpaul.mn.us>
Cc: Kim, Hwa Jeong (CI-StPaul) <Hwa.Jeong.Kim@ci.stpaul.mn.us>

Dear Amy:

We appreciate your decision to engage the Mediation Center and hire its executive director, Aimee Gourlay, to serve as a mediator in the dispute between TCGIS and SHSA.

According to Ms. Gourlay's bio, she has extensive experience dealing with very high-level legislative matters and other controversial issues. Under "ordinary" circumstances, we would applaud the decision to engage someone with Ms. Gourlay's exceptional skills.

Unfortunately, these are not ordinary circumstances—and the parameters you have set up for the mediation process seem designed more to reinforce the impression of the parties being at impasse than utilizing Ms. Gourlay's talents to bring the sides together.

We understand that conducting an initial assessment of where the parties are at is an integral part of any successful mediation, and that by asking pertinent questions a mediator might uncover some crucial insights that have not been revealed publicly.

However, by starting this process a mere eight days before the Council is scheduled to consider both historic designation of the church and variances requested by the school, Ms. Gourlay's assessment will enable her to do little more than confirm what the Council already knows:

SHSA wants to save the former St. Andrew's Church and see it repurposed by the school so that they can meet their educational needs; TCGIS says that won't work and refuses to consider any alternatives apart from demolition of the church and constructing a new building in its place.

If that's the information being sought, Ms. Gourlay could ascertain these facts simply by reading the local newspapers and watching the Council hearing of May 15th.

What could make a difference is for you to do what we've requested for nearly a year: announce publicly that you will not support granting variances for the school building project unless TCGIS actively participates in an open, transparent, and thorough planning process designed to explore all adaptive re-use options for the church, something the school has clearly never attempted.

As you know, the former dean of the U of M School of Architecture offered the services of the Minnesota Design Center on a pro bono basis in a communication to you on May 21st. We do not understand why you have not embraced such an exceptional offer, or why you failed to disclose it to your colleagues—and the public—at the May 22nd Council meeting.

If you are truly interested in solving the dispute that you have noted is “literally” in your own backyard, what better way to do that than have a mediator working with the parties at the same time that a design exercise is commenced to examine the many possibilities for repurposing the church to meet the school's programmatic needs?

All of us involved with SHSA have been advocating for a “win-win” resolution to the conflict that has embroiled the neighborhood for more than a year; we urge you to immediately take the necessary steps that will provide a realistic timeline for doing so. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Teri Alberico, President
Bonnie Younquist, Vice-President
Friends of Warrendale/Save Historic St. Andrew's