

To the City Council:

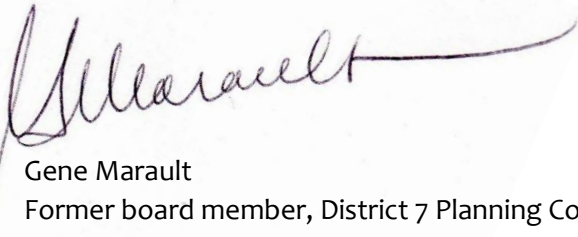
23 June 2019

I've lived in Frogtown for 20 years. Several recent Frogtown shootings have happened within a few hundred feet of my home. Across the alley there was a drive-by with AK-47s that shot up 2 parked vehicles and left bullets in the back of the house. It sounded like a war had landed on us. My heart didn't stop racing for an hour afterward. I know how being near the crossfire feels.

Gun violence is a widespread problem in the US, and it's long past time that we as a whole society deal with it intelligently and effectively.

I'm 4 blocks from Willards which I've frequented a few times. It's a really nice neighborhood bar, and it's sad that those who participate in gun violence sometimes show up there. I trust that the owners of Willards have done all they can to reduce and eliminate problems like this that affect their business, their lives, and the neighbors. Why wouldn't they?

I believe Willards is being victimized the same way the rest of us are: by elected officials who for decades have neglected their duty to pass and enforce common sense gun laws to protect all of us and prevent criminals from getting and using guns. I don't think it's fair to penalize Willards for the failings of politicians all the way from DC to the MN State Capitol down to St Paul City Hall. I don't feel a need to scapegoat Willards for problems that are completely out of their control. I don't see how starving one small business by revoking their liquor license will solve the problems we face here. If not at Willards, then the gun violence will pop up somewhere else in our midst until we address the real causes of gun violence.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Gene Marault", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Gene Marault
Former board member, District 7 Planning Council
Neighborhood Honor Roll, 2008
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