

Burger, Kathryn (CI-StPaul)

From: Michelle Curtis <mcurtis_ed@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 22, 2019 2:06 PM
To: *CI-StPaul_LH-Licensing
Subject: Objection to License #20190001657 Auto Body Repair/Painting Shop

Michelle & Charles Curtis

834 Clear Ave
windows facing the business.
Saint Paul MN 55106

Immediate neighbor on the alley with living room/kitchen

608-354-1506 Michelle Cell

To Whom It May Concern,
My husband and I want to formally object to the above license application (#20190001657) on the following conditions.

a) condition #3 /17 vehicles may be parked on the exterior at any time.

Objection: History is that vehicles have not been allowed to park outside of business hours - it still happens now but **17 vehicles would be a beacon for thievery** - the way it is now all kinds of folks on next door social app report car break ins. If this is to be allowed a neighborhood friendly fence should encircle the property. We see tow trucks unloading cars at all hours of the day and night and almost always on the street.

b) condition #5 /public right-of-way and vehicles awaiting repair.

Objection: There are vehicles awaiting repair that are parked on the street now in violation of parking rules and this has been the case since we moved to this house in June 2017. Right now there is a 4 door blank Honda that's been in the same place for over 4 weeks - appears to have been bought at an auction perhaps and someone plans to fix it up. The point is that the business seems to think the street parking is an extension of their rights to operate and violate parking rules with impunity which is not fair.

c) condition #7 /all repair work must occur within an enclosed building.

Objection: Currently and in all my time living across from the business garage doors the number of times the doors are open while auto body repairs and painting are occurring is incalculable. The standard is to leave the doors open or minimally drawn down. When the noise/fumes are so bad that I can't stand it on the week days that I'm home or leaving late or coming home early I'll call over to them to ask to do something about it. What I have gotten back in response is along the lines that **"this is just normal business operations and they shouldn't have to close the garage doors to conduct business"**.

As for the fumes - it is very clear that painting is occurring in bays that are not connected to the ventilation system that I'm told was installed years ago. There are plenty of days when the fumes are so bad you have to keep the windows closed and keep the dogs in for fear of toxicity. I'm 99% sure this business is NOT using the ventilation system as required. You can ask for the log for inspections (bet there hasn't been any) and the changing of the filter (never happens I bet) because all that costs money.

I found it very interesting that the conditions did not address the noise and more importantly air pollution that results from the work of this business. Where is the condition that the air filtration system will be checked and cleaned how frequently?

d) condition #9/ parking longer than 10 days not allowed.

Objection: Right now there is a 4 door black Honda that's been in the same place for over 4 weeks on street parking no less - it appears to have been bought at an auction perhaps and someone plans to fix it up. While Saint Paul is a large city the Police are in the area enough to be alert to the suspicious nature of a car never moving for 4 weeks.

Conclusion:

Had I appreciated the extent to which this auto body business impacts our ability to enjoy our home to the extent it does during the week days I would never have bought the house. period. As is we are in constant disgust of the breaking of rules that occurs. Maybe just maybe if the garage doors remained closed to conduct their business and proper ventilation was observed and parking rules enforced it would be a different matter. But when the weather is hot they will not close the doors, when they are painting they won't close the doors, nor sanding and all other matter of repair activity that goes on.

As it is now there is no reason to believe any changes will be forthcoming. Even the current tenants (really individual self-employed contractors I believe) continue to break all kinds of rules and this is knowing there is a new license application under review. I don't believe the current repair people are operating under appropriate labor standards - i.e. the current license doesn't allow for the "renting" out of repair bays. While I have no first hand knowledge of the following allegation there have been a number of neighbors who have warned us of the "chop shop" nature of the "gypsy" auto body workers.

Our hope is that we can manage to sell our home without someone figuring out the pollution (air and noise) problem from this business. And that isn't addressing the newest business NorthStar Behavioral Health across the street. I never saw any permit/license request for them and given the opioid crisis I'm just waiting to have counseling services performed (only across the street from Johnson High and a block from the elementary school.)

I look forward to attending a hearing on this application - as do a number of our neighbors.

Sincerely,

Michelle Curtis