

TO: City of St. Paul
Office of the City Council
15 West Kellogg Boulevard
St. Paul Minnesota

FROM: Mary Kattar

RE: Agenda Item LLH RR 19-30
Removal or Repair of the Structure at 1904 Princeton Avenue

Sworn Statement of Mary Kattar.

I, Mary Kattar, make the following statement to the St. Paul City Council.

1. In April 2007, my home was condemned as unfit for human habitation and we were ordered to vacate. The house has been unoccupied since. At that time, pictures of the inside of the house were placed in the record and available to view as part of the Agenda. Although the house has been unoccupied since then, there has always been heat, water and electricity available.
2. Not much happened between April 2007 and September 2019. But on September 23 I was given an Order to Abate Nuisance Buildings. At that time, I asked for a series of extensions due to a variety of reasons, including the death of my father and inability to get help during the recent COVID-19 pandemic.
3. However, one of the issues that continued to come into play is my fight with Hoarder syndrome. In March, I went to see a mental health expert who indicated I have elements of the Hoarder syndrome. This was consistent with a mental health session I had several years ago.
4. I admit, at that time, the house was only slighter cleaner than in September. Many of the rooms simply had items on the floor, were not sorted and made it difficult to access to any parts of the rooms or closet. See Exhibit 1.

5. We tried to satisfy the work required in the September Order by ourselves. Some of the items on the Order were difficult to do in the winter. We ended up requesting extension including to deal with my father's death and the COVID-19 reality. I was told to contact a social worker and she worked with me for a while.

6. After the extensions, we received bids for cleaning, and sale for flipping and demolition.

7. But then later in March, I was able to dedicate more time to the house, but unfortunately that time was mostly by myself because of COVID. At that time, charity locations were closed, and finding cleaning help was limited.

8. From my perspective, I have made a lot of progress. See Exhibit 2. For example, I actually filled a dumpster with items I have not been able to throw away in the past. That might not seem like much to others, but it is a big step for me. After that, I began classifying everything in the house into three categories: Trash, Recycle/Donated/Keep.

a. Thrash has been pretty simple. I have thrown away a full dumpster and have more to throw out. I have gotten rid of nearly all furniture and several boxes of things that my kids did not want.

b. Recycle. I have recycled newspapers and magazines and literally hundreds of books. The same has happened for all computers, scanners, keyboards, an air conditioner, etc.

c. Save. Most of this category are things my kids may want to have but we have not had time them look at all it yet. I have a storage pod and will place what is left into the pod for future processing.

9. I know this may be viewed as too little to late. But I feel I have made real progress in the last 4 weeks. I am asking the City to give me another 4 or 5 weeks to clear out the house so inspectors can come in and determine exactly what work needs to be done to bring the house into code compliance. At that point, we can hire a general contractor to size the projects and establish who will be doing the work and when. I agree to place money into a trust account that is equal to the amount of work that needs to be done or any other arrangement the City approves.

June 23, 2020

/s/ _____
Mary Kattar

Exhibit 1: Photos From March 2020











Exhibit 2. Photos from June 23, 2020













