



City of Saint Paul

15 West Kellogg Blvd.
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Minutes - Final

Legislative Hearings

Marcia Moermond, Legislative Hearing Officer
Mai Vang, Hearing Coordinator
Joanna Zimny, Executive Assistant
legislativehearings@ci.stpaul.mn.us
651-266-8585

Tuesday, March 16, 2021

9:00 AM

Remote Hearing

- 9 [RLH TA 21-164](#) Ratifying the Appealed Special Tax Assessment for property at 1746 SIMS AVENUE. (File No. J2106E, Assessment No. 218305) (Public hearing continued to July 14, 2021)

Sponsors: Yang

Continue PH to July 14, 2021. If PO trims shrubs, undergrowth and weeds near alley and garage, reduce assessment from \$157 to \$75.

Geleta Megerssa, owner, appeared via phone

Staff report by Supervisor Lisa Martin: this an appealed tax assessment for excessive inspection billed during September 21 to October 21, 2020 for a garbage summary abatement for drawers and other miscellaneous garbage near the alley. Orders were sent September 21, compliance date of September 28, 2020. An extension was given September 29, and it was rechecked October 6. Work was done by Parks on October 8, 2020 for a total proposed assessment of \$157. No returned mail. The only history on the property was for tall grass and weeds on June 25, 2019 that was done by the owner. This was resolved by the time the crew went out, the cost is for the trucks to go to the property for the cleanup.

Moermond: so the work wasn't done on deadline, so he sent a crew to clean it up, but by the time they went out the work was done, so the City wasn't to charge for the cost of the crew going out.

Megerssa: when they called me to take care of it, I took care of it without sending the crew, why did they send the crew?

Moermond: because you weren't done by the deadline.

Megerssa: I requested an extension, he gave me an additional week. Then I cleaned it up. There was a one-week extension. That neighbor is the kind of neighbor who puts their stuff in my yard. I don't know what to do in the future. They gave me a week to clean it up. I did that.

Moermond: it looks like they sent you an order originally September 21 with a week. You called and asked for an extension, which you got for another week. So you're absolutely right. The inspector went out October 6, which was your extension date and took a picture of the work not being done by then. That's why he sent this bill. You must have done it after October 6, but before the crew showed up October 8.

Megerssa: but they gave me an extension and after I did it maybe they brought the stuff out again. This keeps happening, I don't know what to do. They bring the stuff, the guy calls me, and then they do it again. That's the reason. Every time I take care of it.

Moermond: I hear you.

Megerssa: the date he gave me, I cleaned, and then they did it again. I cleaned up the stuff. Every night it is happening.

Moermond: it looks to me looking at the photographs is it was partially done. I'm not 100 percent sure. The photos in the order shows the garage door side, I'm assuming on the alley, and then the follow up photos shows the side of the garage. There's no follow up picture on what's in front of the garage. That does appear to be cardboard, and tires, and leaves on top of it. It looks like it had been there a while.

Megerssa: they do cars in the garage.

Moermond: who is they?

Megerssa: the neighbor, it could be theirs. What shall I do? For my safety I don't say anything. It is very dangerous area.

Moermond: you don't live here though, right? You live in Maple Grove?

Megerssa: yes. I go every week.

Moermond: you said they again, do you mean the neighbors?

Megerssa: it could be the neighbors or the tenants bringing stuff in. They bring in tires, I pay. They keep bringing it.

Moermond: it looks to me like the area by the garage isn't well maintained, there is a lot of overgrowth. That could be cut down. There appears to be vines and shrubs growing between the garage door and the alley, also besides the garage. If that is better maintained it makes you a less attractive target for dumping. Right now, it looks like no one cares and no one keeps eyes on it. Clearing out that brush and putting up a motion light so when someone goes by it lights up and it feels like there's eyes on. You can even put a sign up that it is under video surveillance.

Megerssa: there is the tree. I'll talk with the neighbor maybe; it is in the neighbor's yard.

Moermond: it looks like you have a ton of growth not related to the tree, a lot of volunteer growth between garage and alley. that is definitely your land.

Megerssa: I don't have a tree.

Moermond: not a tree, vines and weeds that are quite tall.

Megerssa: I don't know, maybe I will look. The thing is, in the future, there is a light already. Maybe a video camera is the only choice I have.

Moermond: I'd like to see the area cleaned up. Ms. Martin, I'm looking at the photos from the September 21 orders. The inspector wrote orders on what appears to be dumped materials along with some yard waste. I'm wondering why a part of those orders wasn't to cut the tall grass and weeds?

Martin: that's a good question. I can't answer why it wasn't called out. The bigger concern is getting the garbage taken care of. The weeds aren't impeding into the alley right of way. This was called out in October, end of year, thinking they would die during winter. It is something that should be addressed.

Moermond: I can see reducing this if the area gets cleaned up. Let's push this out to July 14. I will ask them to continue the public hearing until then, and we'll get a follow up inspection the week before to confirm the area is cleaned up and not a good target for dumping. If that happens I'll reduce this to \$75. So reduced by half. We will send you an email with the recommendation, you won't get a bill until after the Council votes in July.

Referred to the City Council due back on 4/14/2021