

Duplex @ 402 Minnehaha Ave. W

Owners: Ken and Norma Ostlie

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AUG 24 2021

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Context:

- *Certificate of Occupancy renewed March 2019 after condemnation of lower unit and basement based on hoarder tenant – Removed 5 dumpsters of trash cleaned, repainted, re-did maple floors, restored alarms, installed new water heater, repaired basement floor, minor electrical code violations*
- *My wife and I kept rent reasonable (\$700-800) while rents were rising rapidly in St. Paul.*
- *Rented lower unit to wife (SMP) & husband that qualified for rental support through Catholic Charities – Part of program to get homeless people off the street. Met them as part of work crew clearing out the previous tenant's and cleaning apartment. Catholic Charities agreed to provide monthly visits and supervise transition from homeless to apartment dwelling.*
- *Moved into apartment in April as CoVid19 epidemic surged. Catholic Charities supplied furniture, bedding, cleaning supplies, etc. After initial visit, Catholic Charities decided to minimize CoVid risk to employees and cut all in-person visits with tenants, so no monthly inspections or transitional supervision / assistance occurred.*
- *Tenant and husband did well (aside from clean up reminders, hoarding tendency) until husband disappeared (rumors of beating before departure)*
- *Wife (SMP) suffered an apparent psychotic break with visual hallucinations (saw faces in walls according to police report), auditory hallucinations (heard husband calling for help from walls, ceiling and upstairs), paranoia (numerous calls to police about people trying to break into apartment) and ideation that upstairs tenants had captured her husband, beat and tortured him, and kept him imprisoned in space between her ceiling and their floor.*
- *Generated over 40 9-1-1 calls from by her or about her actions from January to April. Received letter from St. Paul Police about "nuisance" calls and extraordinary demands on police. Police assign COAST unit to her calls.*
- *At some point she begins damaging apartment with a sawzall, a reciprocating cutting tool, apparently attempting to free husband (response to visual and auditory hallucinations).*
- *March 22 COAST response to 9-1-1 call results in voluntary transport to Regions Hospital. Officers advise not entering apartment to without officers because of her mental state.*

- *We issue 30-day lease termination notice based on her behavior (April 14). Triggers 9-1-1 calls.*
- *I notify Catholic Charities with my concerns and they began talking to her about getting mental health assistance, and even arrange alternative housing with security, on-site mental health care conditional on her participation in treatment to stabilize her. She refused. Even after 2 fire attempts, COAST unit still deems her not a risk to herself or others.*
- *May 6-7 Tenant reports people attempting to break in and kill her. Police respond and transport her voluntarily to Regions for a psych evaluation. Two hours later she's back at apartment and places a number of paranoid 9-1-1 calls culminating in a fire 9-1-1 call by the upstairs tenants. She started a juniper bough, sage fire on the gas stove to generate a "cleansing smoke" and it got out of hand. Smoke triggered alarms in upper unit. COAST unit finally deems her a threat and transports for 72-hr hold. Psych evaluation at that time led to commitment in Fairview Riverside Psych Locked Ward.*
- *May 7 Lower Unit Condemned. During inspection with Officer A.J. Neis, I get to see extent of damage for first time since April.*
- *July 22 Insurance claim filed. Independent adjuster visit occurs on July 22. The insurance company doesn't know how to handle a claim like this. I have not seen an assessment of the damage nor heard anything from the insurance company at this point.*
- *Upper unit inspected on Aug. 12; upstairs tenant not available on short notice on May 6.*

Repair Activities & Context:

1. *Clean out of Floor 1 and Basement – Completed (5 dumpsters)*
2. *Secure broken doors and windows – Completed after a month-long concentrated series of break-ins by Tenant, her family and associated homeless friends (windows broken – floor 1, basement; doors kicked in, holes cut in skirting of porches). Covered windows and doors inside and outside. Police at one point even requested emergency assistance from Code Enforcement to secure duplex when unit was broken into despite plywood covering. Their coverings broken into the next night. Ended when we installed security system, physical presence working on duplex at night.*
3. *General construction situation: Tremendous demand for new construction and renovations means delays until repairs can be undertaken, supply shortages (security / IT components) and delayed delivery of ordered items (e.g., windows & doors). Luckily a neighbor, who is a contractor, is pulling some strings but small projects have a lower priority.*

Status of Repairs:

- **Security top priority – Can't guarantee personal safety, leave repair equipment or supplies without it.**
 - Security system up and operational (SimplySafe).
 - External surveillance cameras (4 up; 2 more planned) now operational.
 - Awaiting arrival of ordered security doors
 - Glass block windows will be installed in basement on Thursday 8/27/2021
- **Walls and Ceilings – Floor 1**
 - Ceiling tiles tested for asbestos – negative
 - Ceiling tiles removed (can't match damaged tiles. Will redo ceilings with drywall.
 - Holes squared off and damaged lath / plaster board removed. Walls ready for plaster / drywall repair but awaiting news on insurance claim.
 - Contractor [Dan's Home Restoration, Lic. #BC666091] is arranging ceiling drywall installation, wall repair, taping and finishing.
- **Woodwork – Floor 1**
 - Stripping, staining and refinishing underway
 - Javier's Floors will be repairing, re-sanding and re-finishing floors
- **Windows**
 - Complete replacement of Floor 1 windows arranged through Dan's Home Restoration – Windows ordered, waiting on delivery (8-10 weeks typical)
- **Doors**
 - Steel security doors with multipoint locking system ordered. Awaiting delivery.
- **Heating**
 - Snelling Heating and Plumbing who installed a new furnace earlier this spring will return to replace 2 end plates, reconnect ductwork (Tenant looking for husband disconnected pieces) and conduct safety tests.
- **Electrical**
 - Dan's Home Restoration has contacted their electrician about replacement of missing fixtures / reconnection of disconnected or moved fixtures and assessment of older wiring exposed by Tenant's damage.
 - Earlier in CoVid outbreak, I had hired an electrician to assess what would be required to run replacement lines for 3 circuits. He started running lines but fell severely ill to CoVid before he pulled a permit. After hospitalization, his phone number was no longer active so I couldn't check on how far he got on project. I was never able to make contact. The electrician will also review the status of these circuits and provide a bid.

- **Porch Foundation**
 - *Removing skirting on porch just before inspection exposed two deteriorated supports. I have asked the concrete guy with Dan's Home Restoration to examine the supports for the porch, jack up the porch, and repair as needed.*
- **Garage**
 - *The garage is unused but it was repeatedly broken into by homeless people for shelter and drug use. It has been cleaned out and secured while primary focus is on the house repairs at this point. The security system has been expanded to include surveillance of garage front doors. The targeted break-ins on the garage, particularly the aluminum front doors, prevented repairs since the repairs themselves were rapidly targeted for subsequent break-ins. When we've determined that the targeted break-ins have subsided, we'll determine whether to tear down the garage or proceed with its repairs.*



CATHOLIC CHARITIES
of St. Paul and Minneapolis

August 24, 2021

To Whom It May Concern:

I am composing this letter to share my program's experience of partnering with Kenneth Ostlie in our combined efforts to house those experiencing homelessness. In our Scattered Site Housing Program, we work with people who have experienced long term homelessness and who also have a disabling condition, to obtain permanent housing. In 2020 our program was able to place a client at 402 Minnehaha Avenue, where they resided for one year.

Mr. Ostlie has shown a willingness to provide rental space that is compatible with the Housing Support program and has also been a supportive presence when our client experienced mental health challenges. The support received by Mr. Ostlie was greatly appreciated, particularly when the client's mental health crisis resulted in multiple calls to the St. Paul police and the Ramsey county mental health crisis line. He worked closely with the client's housing case manager to maintain the client's housing at times when there were significant concerns. Mr. Ostlie appeared to care about the wellbeing of our client and wanted to see them successful in their efforts to remain in housing.

Please feel free to connect with me if you have any questions.

Alicia McNeil

Alicia McNeil, LADC

Program Manager I

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St. Paul Opportunity Center
LTH Scattered Site Housing Support

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