

**Think Before You Click: This email originated outside our organization.**

Hello Council Members,

Copying you on this request to table items #15 and 17 on today's agenda until there is remedy to the irregularities noted below.

I spoke to CM Tolbert's Legislative Aide, Mr. Yust, late yesterday, but was unable to follow up until now this afternoon. I left a voicemail at CM Tolbert's office, but have not been able to discuss this request with either yet. I apologize for writing so close to meeting time.

Thank you for your timely consideration and work you do on behalf of our community.

Margaret Isom  
612.251.7441 mobile

===== Forwarded message =====

From: Margaret Isom <[marge@grophy.com](mailto:marge@grophy.com)>

To: "Kathy" <[kathy@highlanddistrictcouncil.org](mailto:kathy@highlanddistrictcouncil.org)>

Cc: "Yust, Adam" <[Adam.Yust@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:Adam.Yust@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>

Date: Wed, 13 Oct 2021 14:46:36 -0500

Subject: RE: Public Comment for Hearing on Lot Space Open Coverage at Highland Bridge On Oct 6, 2021

===== Forwarded message =====

Hello Adam -- Thanks for the follow up. I ask you to pass on to CM Tolbert and other CM's the request to table today's votes on agenda #'s 15 and 17 for final adoption until the following is sorted out.

1. While my public comment has now been found, I'm curious of other public comments that may have missed attachment to Ford related items #47 and #54 on the Oct 6, 2021 City Council agenda. At least one additional has not been attached: Highland District Council's (HDC) updated resolution dated Sept 21, 2021, sent Sept 22. This remains unattached on today's City Council meeting for topics #15 and 17.

2. Unfortunately, excluding to my comment that's now been posted to Ford Site items #15 (not #17) on today's agenda, all public comments attached for the Oct 6 and 13th meetings date back to *July*. These are the comments that were sent to the Planning Commission when the public hearing took place there. While I'm not omniscient, with so many in the community talking about this, I'm guessing more than two letters submitted since July.

3. Complicating the matter, I've heard from community members today that they'd learned from Early Notification System (ENS) dated ??Sept 1 (ENS is not dated, so it's hard to be certain of the date), that the public hearing would take place at City Council's Oct 13 meeting. However,

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they missed the change of meeting date to Oct 6, apparently hours after the initial ENS. They learned of the change several days *after* the Oct 6 meeting -- too late to contribute public comment as they intended.

4. At the Oct 6 meeting, public hearings #47 and #54 were promptly closed with no discussion by councilmembers except stating Staff Report had been given at the prior meeting, and #47 was *noncontroversial*. As such, a motion was made to move the vote/third hearing for #47, from Oct 13 -- proposed by CM Tolbert -- to Oct 6, and #54 followed suit. The public hearing and motions took less than 3 minutes total for these two agenda items that have been highly discussed in the community since changes to open space were proposed in the summer of 2020.

5. Of note, during item #34 at the Oct 6 meeting, Mr. Joe Spencer was given nearly 4 min total for public testimony. His introduction was (paraphrased) "testimony by one person as required for a public hearing". This topic seemed to have truly no controversy, where as the Ford site topics had over 80 pages and 60 public comments from July in opposition to the proposed amendments. With this community engagement, I struggle to understand why #34 was given public testimony and the Ford topics were not.

With that, it feels due diligence to lay over this topic until additional letters are looked for, public planning to participate in the Oct 13 meeting can, and testimony is allowed as noted in the paragraph above.

Thank you for your consideration and work you do on behalf of our community,

Margaret Isom

---- On Wed, 13 Oct 2021 11:54:36 -0500 **Kathy** <[kathy@highlanddistrictcouncil.org](mailto:kathy@highlanddistrictcouncil.org)> wrote  
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Thank you Adam.

Kathy

Kathy Carruth  
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Highland District Council  
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**From:** Yust, Adam (CI-StPaul) [mailto:[Adam.Yust@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:Adam.Yust@ci.stpaul.mn.us)]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, October 12, 2021 10:37 PM  
**To:** [marge@grophy.com](mailto:marge@grophy.com)  
**Cc:** Kathy  
**Subject:** Re: Public Comment for Hearing on Lot Space Open Coverage at Highland Bridge On Oct 6, 2021

Hi Margaret,

My colleague informed me that she is working to make sure your written testimony will be added. Thanks for connecting earlier this evening.

Regards,  
Adam Yust

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**From:** Margaret Isom <[marge@grophy.com](mailto:marge@grophy.com)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, October 12, 2021 5:28 PM  
**To:** Yust, Adam (CI-StPaul)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Public Comment for Hearing on Lot Space Open Coverage at Highland Bridge On Oct 6, 2021

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Thank you for your call, Adam. Below is the letter I sent to City Council last week but hasn't been posted. Thanks for following up with the City Clerk re: this and exploring if additional letters have been sent to City Council re: "Open Space" since the topic was heard at the Planning Commission's public hearing in July 2021.

In the interest of time, I'm not including a pdf but can as needed. If I have time to get a note off to CM Tolbert, I'll copy you. Sincere thanks,

Marge 612.251.7441 mobile

===== Forwarded message =====

**From:** Margaret Isom <[marge@grophy.com](mailto:marge@grophy.com)>  
**To:** "Contact Council" <[contact-council@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:contact-council@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>  
**Date:** Tue, 05 Oct 2021 11:59:26 -0500  
**Subject:** Public Comment for Hearing on Lot Space Open Coverage at Highland Bridge On Oct

6, 2021

===== Forwarded message =====

Dear City Councilmembers –

I am disturbed that the straightforward intent of open space in the Ford Master Plan has been dissected with what appears to be an easy bypass to increase lot coverage and floor area ratio (FAR). It feels inevitable the build will result in saturated blocks, distinctly different from a *balanced* environment that's been sought for years through community engagement with the city and Ryan.

While green roofs offer powerful benefits, they've unfortunately been couched as a solution to provide an open air balance, far up on rooftops only the few living there can observe. Tying green roofs to increased lot coverage further chips away at open space. And with no guarantee that the repeated variance requests for increased height and lot coverage will stop, building mass only grows beyond what was before determined as the appropriate *balance*.

Lastly, the public process was stunted by lately received and not readily available materials to get informed and contribute to the conversation at both the district council and community level. While the Early Notification System (ENS) was triggered, the topic was studied by only a small group within Highland District Council, there were no community meetings as expected for a controversial topic where broad community input is warranted. Instead, community members were directed to send comments to the Planning Commission.

As a result, I ask that you table this pivotal decision until

- the city can demonstrate a responsible balance between building mass and open space. Depictions of how the resolution would play out, via 3d graphics or models, would be invaluable.
- Ryan can commit to limiting variance requests re: lot coverage, floor area ratio (FAR), set backs, and building heights
- the community is given a genuine opportunity to understand and weigh in on the proposal.
- you can integrate the above information to come to an objective, well researched conclusion.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration,  
Margaret Isom  
1477 Highland Parkway  
St. Paul, MN 55116