



City of Saint Paul

15 West Kellogg Blvd.
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Minutes - Final

Legislative Hearings

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Tuesday, September 13, 2022

9:00 AM

Room 330 City Hall & Court House/Remote

9:00 a.m. Hearings

Remove/Repair Orders

- 1 [RLH RR 22-22](#) Ordering the rehabilitation or razing and removal of the structures at 1508 COMO AVENUE within fifteen (15) days after the June 8, 2022, City Council Public Hearing. (Refers to June 28, 2022 Legislative Hearing)

Sponsors: Jalali

Layover to LH October 11, 2022 at 9 am for update on title status. Building only CCI application to be submitted by COB September 30, 2022.

Christopher Boylan, interested party, appeared

Moermond: you have a letter hear from your attorney indicating they are engaged to work on title issues for the property. Have they indicated any sort of timeline?

Boylan: candidly, I have had difficulty getting returned calls. She explained at the start if she can find a descendent it is quick. She can get sign off from them, so I interpret this as good news. Seemed like we could get closure of title quickly so I can move to sell. I have e a realtor signed up with interested investors. I would like to think this could resolve quickly, but she's causing me a lot of stress by not responding in a timely fashion. I'm paying her by the hour. I think if I switch attorneys I'm starting over and it may take longer. This is a large firm; I'm not sure what her deal is.

Moermond: is she the attorney?

Boylan: yes. She's pretty senior which is maybe why this is taking longer.

Moermond: seems like it is kind of at the skip tracing phase but now they've found a family member. More an investigatory phase.

Boylan: the assistant seems like she's on top of it. Maybe it is normal. I'm going to schedule a meeting when we're done here to try and pin her down on how long this will take. I need closure on this. I just don't know how to make it go any faster.

Moermond: you will have an interest in a property that is 2 dimensional if this doesn't go faster. We're 3 months later, I do have that Performance Deposit and inspection

which is great. But I have no prospects of seeing any kind of work plan, contract for partnership to develop, evidence of financing. I know you understand, so I want you to communicate that to your attorney that this isn't just "boy it would be nice to figure it out". The Council's patience isn't unlimited. What would you like today?

Boylan: I know what I need to do with the attorney. It won't be done. I need more time; I just don't know how long that time is. Based upon her performance I'd say probably a month.

Moermond: attorneys do this all the time. I will give you one more month. Your attorney needs to really perform. This is the first letter I even have from her.

Boylan: you have a letter from her before.

Moermond: oh I do. June 28th.

Boylan: I think there was a built-in lag while she did this court thing to find the descendants. She told me in July it would take about six weeks. I'm not sure when she got that back.

Moermond: and they found someone and it was a dead stop.

Boylan: I'm pushing her as hard as I can. I have no clue if a month is reasonable.

Moermond: every case is different. She thought it was resolvable in six weeks. This letter at the end of the six week says she's found someone.

Boylan: and I don't know next steps. If it involves court, or just a signature.

Moermond: one more month and we need a new progress report. I need a plan of action at that point; something to hang my hat on. October 11th hopefully we'll be in a place where we're much closer to clear title.

Laid Over to the Legislative Hearings due back on 10/11/2022

2 [RLH RR 22-28](#)

Ordering the rehabilitation or razing and removal of the structures at 733 FAIRVIEW AVENUE NORTH within fifteen (15) days after the June 22, 2022, City Council Public Hearing. (Amend to grant 180 days)

Sponsors: Jalali

Grant 180 day to rehab.

Stamate Skliris, owner, appeared

Staff report by Supervisor Joe Yannarely: a letter was sent August 28 referring the matter back to Legislative Hearing today. He was to submit evidence of financing, an affidavit, work plan, and maintain the property. No issues there.

Moermond: and we have some new information submitted. I asked Mr. Bruhn to extend that Code Compliance from 2021. We're operating off that expired code compliance. I have a statement of the bidders and their names. Not their specific bids. And then my question on financing, it looks like it is a checking account from which money was taken, it would have been deposited—wait, the 40k was deposited into checking. Got it. So we have money, affidavit, a plan.

Yannarely: I have expired permits for electrical and mechanical.

Moermond: so you need new permits from the contractors in the work plan. So we'd expect them to file for the permits. Do you have bids to submit?

Skliris: I have them from Mr. Rott, the general, and that's the form that was submitted to me.

Moermond: so this is the scope of work your general prepared, and he's owning that. I can accept that. I think that's acceptable. Mr. Yannarely?

Yannarely: yes, and there is no problem at the property.

Moermond: one last thing, the schedule he feels confident on?

Skliris: yes, I know there's cement that has to be poured, so the sooner the better.

Moermond: great. This goes to Council Wednesday, so I will ask them to amend the resolution to grant 180 days to abate the nuisance condition. We'll insert a follow up hearing six months from now to see if it was abated. You'll get that resolution, a letter confirming today's hearing and tomorrow at Council that will be the recommendation based on the strength of these materials. Permits could be pulled as soon as Friday.

Referred to the City Council due back on 9/21/2022

3 [RLH RR 22-46](#)

Ordering the removal of the structures at 1600 SEVENTH STREET WEST within fifteen (15) days after the August 24, 2022, City Council Public Hearing. (To refer to December 13, 2022 Legislative Hearing)

Sponsors: Noecker

Layover to LH October 11, 2022 at 9 am for update on rehabilitation, demolition, and/or sale of the property pending CCI.

Jacob Steen, attorney o/b/o Burger King Corporation, appeared

Moermond: is the Performance Deposit posted and team inspection applied for?

Steen: we did post the Performance Deposit and I have scheduled a Code Compliance inspection with Mr. Perucca on the 15th. I'll be there on site myself. We've changed vendors for maintenance twice to find someone who can provide the level of service we require. Unfortunately I drove by this morning and it is a frequent site for dumping. We'll light a fire on them and have engaged them 2 to 3 times a week. We've spoken with Mr. Magner on the clearing of individuals camping on the site. As of this morning they look to have vacated

Moermond: I think they said it was their possessions not evidence of actual camping. There is public land the encampment was on so probably a pass through en route.

Steen: and the drive through is relatively isolated so probably a good place for storing items. I have told my client the importance of that. The final disposition of the property depends on that Code Compliance Inspection outcome. I anticipate costs to be higher than staff estimates.

Moermond: is a contractor joining you?

Steen: Perucca said we could but they won't discuss things, so he said not to. We need that full understanding from the City on the requirements. My ask now is to give us some additional time to get inside, we'll continue to make sure we have people on site. This morning I saw it needs attention.

Moermond: let's discuss this again October 11 after your contractors have seen the inspection report, perhaps real estate appraisers.

Steen: we do have some questions about title. I think there are some clouds, but nothing we can't clear up.

Moermond: has the site been maintained?

Yannarely: the last order was to remove tree debris and brush in the drive issued last week with a compliance of the 20th.

Steen: we are updating the address, that was one of our weakest link. There was nothing on site this morning. We'll make sure we coordinate with Mr. Yannarely to make sure they stop going into the black hole.

Moermond: I'm satisfied we're moving forward the way we need to be. We'll talk again in a month.

Laid Over to the Legislative Hearings due back on 10/11/2022

4 [RLH RR 22-30](#)

Ordering the rehabilitation or razing and removal of the structures at 1006 THIRD STREET EAST within fifteen (15) days after the June 22, 2022, City Council Public Hearing. (Amend to grant 180 days)

Sponsors: Prince

Grant 180 days pending approved financial statement and schedule.

Jason Stockwell, owner, appeared

Jerad Landon, JR's Doors and More, general contractor

Staff report by Supervisor Joe Yannarely: performance deposit posted August 29. Code Compliance inspection was completed August 16. No problems at the property.

Moermond: the letter sent July 28?

Yannarely: past due real estate taxes, submit affidavit, financing, work plan and schedule, and continued maintenance.

Moermond: so we are halfway there. We have the money with the Performance Deposit and the taxes under control, and the inspection report. So we're at the point where we're looking for the schedule, scope of work. Tell me about that and how you will be financing the work.

Stockwell: we finally got the HVAC bid back this morning.

Landon: all of the estimates are in.

Stockwell: I have the affidavit and financing, hoping we can pull permits.

Landon: we're thinking around \$150,000. No way of knowing until we remove drywall. Once we open that up we can get better assessment of final costs.

Moermond: anything unusual in the bids you saw? Or was it as anticipated?

Landon: as anticipated.

Stockwell: expected for him, high for me. But that's the market now.

Moermond: tell me about the accountant's statement you have. Does this include an account showing the money is there?

Stockwell: it is just the affidavit.

Moermond: we want both the documentation of the financing exists, a line of credit, account, and affidavit augments that to say we have the money and we promise we will use it exclusively for finishing the project. I've had people show me money and then buy 2 new houses and the money is gone. It isn't enforceable but it is a big handshake on the record saying you're going to do that.

Stockwell: I can email that today.

Moermond: yep, and as soon as we get that we will review them. I think that should do the trick. I'm going to invite you to have a seat, I'll hear a case while those copies are made and we'll review that paperwork. If everything is ok and we're in agreement, we can green light the permits to happen before it goes to Council. If it doesn't we'll talk about what it needs to rectify that.

[recess to review paperwork 9:35 am]

Yannarely: looks pretty comprehensive and I'm getting \$144,000 in quotes.

Stockwell: we've worked with all of them before. They all have the extra licensing for St. Paul.

Moermond: let's get that account statement and a calendar on the next six months look for getting the job done. Guideposts for what expectations can be so if we get to the six month mark we can look back at that and see how we need to adjust course.

Jerad: is October 16 an accurate start date?

Moermond: once we have the money and calendar, we can provide immediate feedback. I'll run this by Mr. Magner and Mr. Yannarely, so potentially pulling permits the end of the week.

Stockwell: we'll get that schedule to Joanna today.

Moermond: and a reminder they have to be pulled in person for these types of property.

Referred to the City Council due back on 9/28/2022

THIRD STREET EAST within fifteen (15) days after the June 8, 2022, City Council Public Hearing. (Amend to grant 180 days)

Sponsors: Prince

Layover to LH September 27, 2022 at 9 am. PO to submit: 1) updated financing, 2) affidavit, 3) schedule and 4) electrical & building bids.

*Dale Savasten, nephew, appeared
Carl Berger, owner, appeared*

Staff update by Supervisor Joe Yannarely: submit evidence of financing, affidavit dedicating funds, work plan and schedule and continued maintenance which we have.

Moermond: so the plans and the money. WE have the inspection report and taxes taken care of. Where are you at?

Savasten: we have secured mechanical and plumbing bids; we are still waiting on electric. As of yesterday title is still held up in the County. They are saying it should be resolved today. Final electrical today and then we'll have a scope of work and a timeline. If electrical comes in as it says, we're planning on starting demo the 19th.

Moermond: when you say demo? Building or interior?

Savasten: interior.

Moermond: so you will have a building contractor and bid coming forward?

Savasten: yes.

Moermond: this is all good. What are you estimating on cost?

Savasten: we're trying to keep it \$100,000.

Moermond: that's a good goal. City's guess was exceeding \$50,000.

Savasten: we're estimating close to \$100,000.

Moermond: was the title behind because it is taking a while to process that? I know they don't do title work if there are taxes owing.

Savasten: they had to reexamine the title. That's what they sent as of yesterday. She thought she'd have it done yesterday but we haven't seen anything. So as far as we know everything is clear on the title.

Moermond: as you talk to contractors and think about how you proceed with winter coming on. AS your own general what are you thinking you'll do for managing the next six months.

Savasten: our goal is to be done before the first of the year. The retaining wall might be spring. That would be worst case.

Moermond: how substantial is that wall?

Savasten: it is bad. Engineering. Every contractor is saying next summer.

Moermond: I'm not surprised to hear that.

Yannarely: that's what we're hearing on everything.

Savasten: we found a couple of contractors that have a gap in work so we're trying to work within their timelines.

Moermond: I'll lay this over 2 weeks, September 27. If you have your materials in before then and we can see the balance of the items and schedule and the affidavit and financing before then, as with the previous case I'd be happy to review and get this green-lighted so permits can be pulled sooner than later. We need that schedule. Financing.

Berger: I brought that to you prior.

Moermond: this last went to Council June 8th, so we're several months down the line. We just want a more current number and then the affidavit. You submitted good documentation so I don't have concerns there really. Just proof you didn't go buy six timeshares.

Laid Over to the Legislative Hearings due back on 9/27/2022

6 [RLH RR 22-53](#)

Ordering the rehabilitation or razing and removal of the structures at 39 HILLTOP LANE within fifteen (15) days after the October 12, 2022, City Council Public Hearing. (Grant 180 days)

Sponsors: Tolbert

Remove within 15 days with no option to repair.

(After 9/13 hearing PO paid for CCI and posted PD, so it was referred to 9/27 at 9 am - JZ)

No one appeared

Moermond: we have no contact information for the owner and no one is here. I know there was correspondence with the ward 3 office on this.

Staff report by Supervisor Joe Yannarely: the building is a one-story, wood frame, single-family dwelling with an attached one-stall garage on a lot of 9,148 square feet. According to our files, it has been a vacant building since October 15, 2013. The current property owner is Leslee G Mogol, per Amanda and Ramsey County Property records. On June 16, 2022, an inspection of the building was conducted, a list of deficiencies which constitute a nuisance condition was developed and photographs were taken. An Order to Abate a Nuisance Building was posted on June 27, 2022, with a compliance date of July 27, 2022. As of this date, the property remains in a condition which comprises a nuisance as defined by the legislative code. Taxation has placed an estimated market value of \$168,600 on the land and \$267,500 on the building. Real estate taxes for the first half of 2022 have not been paid. Total amount due is \$4,579.30, which includes penalty and interest. The vacant building registration fees were paid by assessment on November 1, 2021. As of September 12, 2022, a Code Compliance Inspection has not been done. As of September 12, 2022, the \$5,000 performance deposit has not been posted. There have been two summary abatement orders since 2013. There have been two work orders issued for

Garbage/rubbish and Boarding/securing. Code Enforcement Officers estimate the cost to repair this structure exceeds \$100,000. The estimated cost to demolish exceeds \$40,000 (interior is in a gross-unsanitary condition; hoarding situation). That can be expensive.

Moermond: I hear it has been a registered Vacant Building for 9 years. The taxes haven't been paid. The Code Compliance Inspection wasn't applied for. No Performance Deposit. These are all indicators of abandonment of the property. However, we do have relatively good exterior maintenance being done. It is a mixed bag. I know it has been a problem for the neighborhood. I'm thinking the property value may not have been examined lately given the structure's conditions. If it has been hoarded. Condemned September 25, 2013. Owner occupied and lack of water service. It probably has been hoarded since at least 2013.

Yannarely: likely a lot of mold and a lot of vermin. It is an extremely nice part of town.

Moermond: having no one representing the property, I'm going to recommend it is removed within 15 days with no option to repair.

Laid Over to the Legislative Hearings due back on 9/27/2022

7 [RLH RR 22-54](#)

Ordering the rehabilitation or razing and removal of the structures at 342 THOMAS AVENUE within fifteen (15) days after the October 12, 2022, City Council Public Hearing. (Legislative Hearing October 11, 2022)

Sponsors: Balenger

Layover to LH September 27, 2022 at 9 am (PO contacted DSI after hearing).

No one appeared

Moermond: we have no one here and no one has contacted us to be called in.

Staff report by Supervisor Joe Yannarely: The building is a two-story, wood frame, single-family dwelling with a detached two-stall garage on a lot of 6,534 square feet. According to our files, it has been a vacant building since August 22, 2019. The current property owner is Manuel Crespo, per Amanda and Ramsey County Property records. On June 17, 2022, an inspection of the building was conducted, a list of deficiencies which constitute a nuisance condition was developed and photographs were taken. An Order to Abate a Nuisance Building was posted on June 27, 2022, with a compliance date of July 27, 2022. As of this date, the property remains in a condition which comprises a nuisance as defined by the legislative code. Taxation has placed an estimated market value of \$20,000 on the land and \$120,900 on the building. Real estate taxes for the first half of 2022 have not been paid. Total amount due is \$2,903.99 which includes penalty and interest. Taxes for the second half of 2022 are due on October 17, 2022 in the amount of \$2,640.00. The vacant building registration fees are due in owing in the amount of \$2,459. A Code Compliance Inspection was done on December 26, 2019 and has since expired. As of September 12, 2022, the \$5,000 performance deposit has not been posted. There have been three Summary Abatement notices since 2019. No work orders have been issued. Code Enforcement Officers estimate the cost to repair this structure exceeds \$100,000. The estimated cost to demolish exceeds \$40,000. We sent a Summary Abatement Order this morning as well as an NCC order. It may be illegally occupied.

Moermond: has the Department taken measures to deal with the illegal occupation?

Yannarely: we don't know for sure. According to Inspector Dornfeld he had contact with the person and believed it to be illegally occupied from time to time. A neighbor called in and said there was drug paraphernalia and it was broken into. We had it secured at that time, May of 2022.

Moermond: No one is here to speak on behalf of the property. With the unpaid taxes and lack of action since 2019, again it is puzzling because there are no work orders issued, but they aren't taking steps to fix the building or show up here.

Yannarely: the retaining wall needs help, the front of the building needs siding. It looks like someone was working on it at times.

Moermond: so I'll recommend the Council order it removed within 15 days with no option to rehab.

Laid Over to the Legislative Hearings due back on 9/27/2022

10:00 a.m. Hearings

Making Finding on Nuisance Abatements

- 8 [RLH RR 22-50](#) First Making finding on the appealed substantial abatement ordered for 288 AVON STREET NORTH in Council File RLH RR 22-16.

Sponsors: Balenger

Grant additional 90 days pending updated schedule. Continue PD.

Joe Steinmaus, owner, appeared via phone

Moermond: calling about 288 Avon Street N. We're at the 6 month mark and need to make a finding about where you are at. Mr. Yannarely is here. We heard from Nathan Bruhn he estimates you're at the 60% mark.

Steinmaus: I thought about 65%.

Moermond: you're passed the 50% mark, which means I can recommend the Performance Deposit is continued and no additional money needs to be posted.

Steinmaus: we added a garage and patio, driveway. I sent pictures to Mai yesterday. Hoping to list it for \$465,000. Sheetrockers are ready to go after a couple more sign-offs.

Moermond: do you have a schedule you can update since the first is expired?

Steinmaus: 60 more days it will be done and on the market.

Moermond: just clock that out for me what will happen in sixty days. I'd prefer going 90 or 120 in case you have something unexpected.

Steinmaus: 90 is fine we just want it listed before it gets cold. I'll get you that schedule.

Moermond: we'll send this to Council in a couple weeks, with the benefit of the updated schedule, I'll recommend an additional 90 days to complete.

Referred to the City Council due back on 9/28/2022

9 [RLH RR 22-51](#)

Second Making finding on the appealed substantial abatement ordered for 655 JESSAMINE AVENUE EAST in Council File RLH RR 22-5.

Sponsors: Yang

Grant additional 180 days pending updated schedule. Continue 10k PD.

John Ray, owner, appeared via phone

Wendy Ray, property manager, appeared via phone

Moermond: we're following up on 655 East Jessamine.

Staff update by Supervisor Joe Yannarely: email from Inspector Bruhn indicates 75% complete. There have been no finalized permits yet. It has been maintained.

Moermond: so we're at 75%, last time we spoke we were at 15%. So there has been a fair bit of progress. How is it going Mr. Ray?

Ray: it looks pretty nice. We had a City water problem. Nathan found a leak in the meter that belongs to the City. They said it was fine, and then when they turned everything on it leaked inside. They're supposed to be replacing it today, or yesterday.

Moermond: so it was supposed to get replaced yesterday but didn't?

Ray: they were supposed to do it 4 months ago. Nathan was going to call and tell them they had to. My niece said they showed up yesterday.

Moermond: I'm glad to hear that. Tell me, I have a schedule having you being done, but you aren't. I typically ask for a fresh schedule to get past the finish line. Is that something you can put together?

Ray: I can have my contractor do that. Now that water is done, everything is roughed in. The house is pretty much completed inside.

Moermond: we'll look for that updated work plan. How long will they need to develop that?

Ray: he is saying by the end of October. It is so close to being done. Nathan spotted another foundation problem, so they had to fix that.

Wendy Ray: they replaced the meter yesterday. There was loose gate valve they're fixing this week. Then the City will shut off the water, replace that valve, and turn it back on. Nathan found a rotting board on the front porch, so they have someone coming out to replace that. After that we can work on some of the moisture in the basement. Once that is done we're basically done.

Moermond: if you contractor could put together a simple statement and schedule of what they need to finish, that's all I need. You gave a nice verbal summary; I just need it in writing. You have \$10,000 Performance Deposit posted; I will recommend that is continued. I'm hearing you'll be done sooner versus later. I can give up to 180 days. It

doesn't mean to have to use it.

Ray: I want it done.

Moermond: I understand. I want to make sure you have the time you need, plus.

Ray: 180 days would be great; we won't need it hopefully.

Referred to the City Council due back on 9/28/2022

Repurchase Application

- 10 [RLH OA 22-7](#) Making recommendation to Ramsey County on the application of Alexis Abreu Rivero for repurchase of tax forfeited property at 923 WESTMINSTER STREET.

Sponsors: Brendmoen

Recommend allowing for repurchase.

Supervisor Joe Yannarely: the only thing that caught Mr. Magner's eye was it was a rental property.

Moermond: they are saying occupied single family? So an occupied single family rental?

Yannarely: that's what Manager Magner is saying. Fair amount of police calls. They say it was a change of ownership, Magner says likely a Contract for Deed, that's why they were late. He didn't see any reason not to approve from the Code Enforcement angle.

Moermond: looking at the 5 year call log from the police, it doesn't look terrible when broken down by year. Looks like maybe a family with some problems renting there. The Fire Certificate of Occupancy inspection history indicates a class 3 Rental property. It was most recently inspected April 28, 2022. So very current inspection. Because it is class C it is scheduled for reinspection next year. That seems consistent with not spending money on taxes, not spending money on basic maintenance. But it isn't condemned or revoked. Let's recommend the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners allows for repurchase.

Referred to the City Council due back on 9/21/2022

11:00 a.m. Hearings

Summary & Vehicle Abatement Orders

- 11 [RLH SAO 22-40](#) Making finding on the appealed nuisance abatement ordered for 769 HAGUE AVENUE in Council File RLH SAO 22-29.

Layover to November 15, 2022 (additional extension given by LHO).

Laid Over to the Legislative Hearings due back on 11/15/2022