



West 7th/Fort Road Federation

395 Superior Street

Saint Paul, MN 55102

651.298.5599

www.FortRoadFederation.org

July 16, 2026

Saint Paul Housing and Redevelopment Authority
15 West Kellogg Boulevard
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Re: Support for Gap Funding – 47 Douglas Street

Dear Chair and Members of the Housing and Redevelopment Authority,

On behalf of the West 7th/Fort Road Federation, we are writing in support of Historic Saint Paul's request for an additional \$29,961 in development gap funding for the rehabilitation of the historic home at 47 Douglas Street.

For more than a decade, this property has remained vacant despite multiple redevelopment efforts. Throughout that time, neighborhood residents have advocated for preservation over demolition, recognizing the home's historical significance and its contribution to the character of the West 7th neighborhood.

Historic Saint Paul's proposal represents a strong opportunity to return this vacant property to productive use. The project will preserve an important piece of Saint Paul's history while creating a permanently rehabilitated home that will be sold to an income-qualified owner-occupant, advancing both historic preservation and affordable homeownership goals.

The requested increase is an investment that will ensure this long anticipated project can move forward. Approving the additional funding will protect the significant public investment already made, prevent another stalled redevelopment effort, and bring a vacant historic property back into productive use for the benefit of the neighborhood.

The West 7th/Fort Road Federation appreciates the HRA's continued commitment to neighborhood revitalization, historic preservation, and expanding homeownership opportunities. We respectfully encourage the HRA Board to support Historic Saint Paul's request for the additional development gap funding.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Julia McColley
Executive Director



Julia McColley <julia@fortroadfederation.org>

Support for the Redevelopment of 47 Douglas Street

1 message

Marit Brock [REDACTED]

Fri, Jan 9, 2026 at 1:25 PM

To: Julia McColley <julia@fortroadfederation.org>

Hi Julia - I am writing this letter to advocate for the rehabilitation of the house at 47 Douglas Street. This property isn't just a structure—it's the final piece of the puzzle in our original vision for the Little Bohemia Neighborhood Association.

When we established the Little Bohemia Neighborhood Association in 2009, our mission was driven by hope and determination: to work hand in hand with the City of Saint Paul and the Fort Road Federation to breathe new life into distressed, neglected rental properties left vacant after the mortgage crisis. Many skeptics doubted us, claiming these houses were too far gone or too mismatched for modern homebuyers. But they were wrong. Our unwavering partnership has transformed more than 20 houses into vibrant, owner-occupied homes—testaments to what's possible when communities come together. Alongside the City and dedicated organizations like Historic Saint Paul and NeighborWorks home partners, we have lovingly restored homes at 41 Douglas, 69 Garfield, and 412 Goodrich—small houses on small lots that might have been overlooked, but now shine as true gems of our neighborhood. These homes may be modest, but their worth is immense—they are the heart and soul of our community.

The house at 47 Douglas has stood empty for far too long—not because of a lack of interest. Many passionate developers have expressed their desire to restore it over the years. The delay has stemmed from bureaucratic processes at the City, which have unfortunately postponed or deferred plans time and again. I am grateful that the plans proposed by Historic Saint Paul are still under consideration because they have a remarkable track record of thoughtfully revitalizing old houses in historic neighborhoods like ours. This property holds the potential to be a shining jewel—an ideal home for a wonderful new neighbor, someone who will cherish and continue the legacy of this place. However, given the lot's size, removing the house would strip away much of its value, rendering the lot almost unusable.

Please stand with us in support of the redevelopment of 47 Douglas Street. Let's preserve the soul of our neighborhood, restore its beauty, and create a future filled with hope and community pride.

Thank you!

Marit Brock

[REDACTED]
[Saint Paul, MN 55102](#)

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Marit Brock

She/Her

[REDACTED]



Julia McColley <julia@fortroadfederation.org>

Concerning 47 Douglas Street:

1 message

Naomi Austin [REDACTED]

Fri, Jan 9, 2026 at 7:10 PM

To: julia@fortroadfederation.org

Dear Julia,

I am writing to you concerning the decade long battle to get 47 Douglas financed and restored. The house at 47 Douglas Street is a charming, nearly intact example of Victorian vernacular architecture. It has been a part of the fabric of the Little Bohemia neighborhood for nearly 140 years. Its modest size is perfect for a starter home. Its small, non-conforming lot makes a reasonable replacement build difficult. As you and the Federation are well aware, the neighborhood has been waiting for an unreasonable amount of time for this project to move forward. The years this house has remained vacant is inexcusable, and has exacerbated its alarming deterioration.

Little Bohemia is one of the oldest neighborhoods in Saint Paul. It, and the other neighborhoods bordering West 7th Street have a strong track record and interest in historic preservation, restoration, and reuse of our heritage structures. Beyond the large projects like the Schmidt Brewery site and the Hope firehouse (which also faced possible demolition) is the gem Waldmann Brewery (thanks to Tom Schoeder). The last minute save from demolition of 412 Goodrich Avenue, a beautiful yet modest Greek Revival house that has stood in our neighborhood since before Minnesota was a state, was largely due to efforts of neighbors and Historic St. Paul.

Yet, we certainly have had our losses, from the city installing the FCC garbage facility on Randolph Avenue (squandering a prime housing development site), to the horrifying removal of the Justus Ramsey House. This house was on the National Historic Registry for almost fifty years (since 1975) and was one of only a few native limestone structures left, and possibly the oldest house in Saint Paul. Its removal has left a stain on the historic and cultural fabric of our neighborhood that will not be forgotten.

These losses have left a cynical feeling about the City's commitment to upholding the best interests of our community. Let's not add 47 Douglas to this list of losses.

Thank you for your time. Please feel free to share my thoughts with whomever you feel is appropriate.

Sincerely,

Naomi Austin

[REDACTED]
St. Paul, MN 55102
[REDACTED]



Julia McColley <julia@fortroadfederation.org>

my thoughts re 7 Douglas

1 message

sharon lynch [REDACTED]

Tue, Jan 6, 2026 at 6:36 PM

To: Julia McColley <julia@fortroadfederation.org>

47 Douglas Street is a 900 square foot, 1887 home sitting on a very small lot. It has 2 bedrooms and beautiful, unusual woodwork. It has been unoccupied for some time. While there has been interest in rehab and an organization willing to do so, the funds have not been sufficient. Losing this home due to lack of funds would be a terrible and shameful loss. Furthermore, the size of the lot would likely not allow another home to be constructed on it. In the past fifteen years, many homes have been rehabilitated and quickly sold. This is the last vacant home in our neighborhood.

This small home is what our city seems to want and need. It would be perfect as a starter home, or for a single person. And, because the lot is small, very little yard work needed.

In conclusion, 47 Douglas is a small, charming, old home in need of rehabilitation. This historic home sits in the midst of our historic neighborhood. Losing this irreplaceable home for lack of a relatively small amount of money would be a shame.



Julia McColley <julia@fortroadfederation.org>

Support for 47 Douglas

John Yust [REDACTED]

Wed, Jan 7, 2026 at 2:19 PM

To: McColley Julia <julia@fortroadfederation.org>

Cc: Duhr Meg [REDACTED], Lynch Sharon <sondouglas@hotmail.com>, Miller Richard [REDACTED], Christofferson David [REDACTED]

Hi Julia,

FYI.

To: The West Seventh / Fort Road Federation

Please support 47 Douglas funding for the rehabilitation and restoration of this property. The building has wonderful architectural plans (by Sylvia Frank, Architect) and developer support (Historic Saint Paul). This property needs to be back on the tax rolls. It will make a special home for a new occupant in the Little Bohemia Neighborhood. We have been waiting years for this project to move forward. Any further delay is unacceptable.

Thank you, John Yust

Resident, [REDACTED]
Saint Paul.



Julia McColley <julia@fortroadfederation.org>

Support for 47 Douglas

1 message

John Yust [REDACTED]

Wed, Jan 7, 2026 at 10:22 AM

To: McColley Julia <julia@fortroadfederation.org>

Cc: Miller Richard [REDACTED], Lynch Sharon [REDACTED], Duhr Meg [REDACTED]

Hi Julia,

See below.

To: The West Seventh/Fort Road Federation.

I wish to state my strong support for the rehabilitation of the house at 47 Douglas Street in the little Bohemia neighborhood.

There has been significant and appropriate investment in the little Bohemia in the last decade.

The City has frequently indicated it's commitment to providing affordable housing in the city and returning property to the tax base. This is an opportunity to contribute to that commitment.

The house at 69 Garfield was in similar circumstances. It was brought back to life and is the home to a happy new neighbor. It is the best looking house on that side of the block.

I believe the same could be the case with 47 Douglas given the chance.

Thanks, Richard Miller