

Mai Vang

From: barbara larkin <bee_larkin@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 11, 2023 11:44 PM
To: *CI-StPaul_LegislativeHearings
Subject: (File No. J2313A, Assessment No. 238512)

To Whom It Concerns:

Thank-you for the opportunity to contest the recommendation made by Ms. Moermond on February 21 regarding my property at 1985 Minnehaha Avenue East. With respect to her decision, I still contend that there were extenuating circumstances behind my inability to mow the grass in my yard last August. I was in Wisconsin for most of that month because of a family emergency, and as such was not aware that the city had been sending me letters alerting me to a complaint having been issued. While in Wisconsin I contracted Covid, so my stay there was extended due to illness. I did not make arrangements for anyone to maintain my property during this time, as I did not anticipate being gone as long as I was. I personally do not believe the yard was that overgrown ("nuisance property" makes it sound like the grass was knee-high), although I recognize that such is subjective. My main concern is that the boulevard held a prairie garden I had been coaxing into existence since 2019, and which was finally thriving (you can see purple thistle in one of the photos). If the picture had been taken from the sidewalk facing the street, you might have been better able to appreciate its variety of native grasses and plants. Minnehaha Avenue sees trash thrown from car windows on a daily basis and I saw my boulevard as a respite from that. In addition to being lovely, it in no way impeded anyone's ability to pass by on the sidewalk. I would hope in the future that the city contracts with landscapers able to recognize these types of gardens as separate from weeds, because the boulevard prairie garden should not have been mowed down -- contrary to whichever of my neighbors thought otherwise. I have lived in my home for almost thirteen years, take pride in being an Eastside resident, and have always maintained my own lawn. However, I am also a single female homeowner with significant health issues on a fixed income. Having to pay almost \$350 to the city for this assessment will be exceptionally punitive. I am asking that you see this for the isolated incident that it is, and forgive the fine I am now expected to pay. Whatever your decision, I sincerely appreciate your time and consideration in this matter. Thank-you again.

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