



CITY OF SAINT PAUL  
OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL

RUSS STARK  
Councilmember

SAMANTHA HENNINGSON  
Legislative Aide

October 8, 2014

To whom it may concern:

This summer, Hamline University's demolition of the "white house" and other properties on Hewitt Avenue created a high degree of concern in the Hamline Midway community. Those concerns were heightened by the University's clear intention to also demolish a home at 1549 Minnehaha Avenue. Neighbors aired some of those concerns at a community meeting September 17 organized by Hamline Midway Coalition, Hamline officials and members of Historic Hamline Village, beginning an important dialogue about how Hamline and the neighborhood can move forward together as neighbors.

Since the meeting, I have been talking with the parties about how to create further opportunities for dialogue and mutual understanding. Hamline President Linda Hanson has indicated to me that the University has heard the community concerns clearly and has committed to a self-imposed one-year moratorium on any demolitions of properties on and around campus, including 1549 Minnehaha Avenue. I applaud these commitments as important first steps toward an improved relationship between the oldest University in the state and the neighborhood in which it resides. Several neighbors whom I met and others whom I've spoken with have also expressed a desire to work with Hamline toward a better relationship and some mutually agreeable outcomes.

My plan is to bring in a neutral third party facilitator/mediator to help the parties come to some greater understanding of perspectives and to work toward improved community/university relations. Issues to be worked on include, but are not limited to, Hamline's desire to expand its campus boundary, and neighbors' concerns about the loss of potentially historic homes. President Hanson has also committed that Hamline will pay for the costs of this outside facilitation/mediation.

In order to get this process started, my Legislative Aide Samantha Henningson and I are busy identifying possible facilitation/mediation consultants who could plan and implement a structured process. The one-year process will include both larger community meetings and a smaller working group consisting of representatives of Hamline and the community. My goal is to help improve relations and identify common goals, particularly surrounding Hamline's plans for campus expansion. I will rely on the outside consultant, as well as input from all parties to help determine the details of how best to proceed.

It is my hope that over the next year the parties can build a stronger relationship based on improved trust and understanding that can serve as the backbone for building a stronger community together. As always, I welcome your thoughts, ideas, and feedback, and I look forward to a constructive dialogue.

If you would like to directly receive updates about this process moving forward, please send your email and mailing address to: [ward4@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:ward4@ci.stpaul.mn.us) with "HU/Hamline Midway" in the subject line.

I will be back in touch in the coming weeks with more details about next steps.

Best,  
Russ Stark

CITY HALL

SUITE 310D

SAINT PAUL, MINNESOTA 55102-1615

651/266-8640