

Campeco LLC  
219 Southgate DR  
Mahtomedi MN 55115

Dear zoning committee members,

I am sending this letter regarding the salvage license (CUP) for 240 W Sycamore Street, and its potential renters. As I am a next door neighbor to this facility, I would like to express my genuine concerns about the city giving the renters a conditional use permit for this facility.

I purchased my property in 2014, I spent almost \$ 400,000.00 remediating petroleum, Lead, Arsenic, and Mercury from our property. I have a closure letter and a no association letter from the MPCA, insuring that my property is not going to need further clean up. It is my concern that I can be reassured that my property will not be contaminated by the neighbors.

If a license is granted, please explain to me how you can protect me from the further contamination of my property, as their properties storm water runoff flows toward my property. I have been told by the city that in order to get a conditional use permit you would require the water to run into the city sewer system and have the property paved and curbed and guttered to protect our environment, and my property. Please let me know if that is correct?

I would also like to address my concern of the fire hazard of the tires and vehicles stacked on their property. When I went down to my property and looked over the fence, they had vehicles stacked one on top of each other over the fence and tires were stacked over 6 feet high, a clear fire hazard, I believe they have been cited for violations.

Please keep me informed as to your decision.

Chris Campe  
Owner Campeco LLC

Atlas Holdings  
228 West Sycamore  
Saint Paul MN 55115



**Ace Auto Parts & Salvage**  
**754 Rice Street**  
**Saint Paul, MN 55117**  
**651-224-9479**

City of St. Paul - Zoning Committee  
Dept. of Planning & Economic Development  
25 west 4<sup>th</sup> St., STE 1300  
St. Paul, MN 55102

5/19/2021

**RE: 21-257-179                      240 W. Sycamore Auto Salvage CUP**

Dear Committee Representatives,

I would like to express my concerns regarding the conditional use permit for 240 West Sycamore Auto Salvage.

Since late fall of 2020, the facility in question has been dismantling vehicles and operating in an auto salvage capacity; unregulated and unlicensed. It is disconcerting that they are only now requesting a permit to operate as such. An unregulated salvage operation in the area is dangerous due to the potential impact on the environment, the community, industry image, and market oversaturation.

Operating unregulated, this facility has already tarnished the reputation every legitimate yard has worked so hard to improve. When you drive by and see partially dismantled carcasses of vehicles, mountains of tires, and a poorly upkept façade; that image reflects poorly on the industry as a whole. The auto salvage industry is an integral cog in the global recycling machine and has spent decades overcoming the old dirty “junk yard” image. Legitimate facilities: give end of life vehicles a new purpose rather than piling up in landfills, are the last defense in ensuring automotive fluids & hazards (such as batteries, oil, lead, mercury switches, & freon) are not polluting our planet, and support our communities by providing a green affordable alternative to costly new manufactured auto parts. While the unkempt illegitimate operations continue to push the industry back to the “junk” ages. Disregarding their effect on the community and the environment.

Licensing and permits are required to ensure proper recycling protocols are followed reducing environmental impact. Since the establishment of the MPCA in the 1960's; The Land of 10,000 Lakes has made a concerted effort to set the gold standard for water protection. Enforcement of this agency's regulations has brought our rivers and lakes back from near extinction. The individuals at 240 W. Sycamore have been operating unregulated in close proximity of several impaired waterways; including the Mississippi River. Without proper training, certification, and inspections from MDH & MPCA; hazards generated from processing end of life vehicles could be contaminating the ground soil and rain runoff making their way into these protected waterways. Ultimately setting back decades of pollution control efforts and adversely impacting the surrounding community.

Aside from the environmental and visual impact on the neighborhood, the auto salvage market in the North End is already highly saturated. Our facility, Ace Auto Parts, has been in operation in the North End since 1929. We are currently one of four legally operating salvage yards in a 2-mile radius. Collectively we have spent decades sharing the market and working together to ensure each facility has room to thrive. Quite frankly the market cannot sustain FIVE salvage yards in such close vicinity of one another. The issue is not just in terms of customer share; the employment market is also in dire straits for the industry. With fewer people looking for careers in the automotive field, having yet another yard to compete for this skilled labor force is going to put further strain on already impossible recruitment efforts for all of the existing neighborhood facilities.

Approving this permit for a facility that has chosen to skirt the laws for months (and continues operations unregulated) would be detrimental to the livelihoods of all the legitimate auto salvage operations in the North End community. I ask that you take my concerns and those my fellow industry business owners into consideration before making a judgement on this matter. You can choose to be part of the problem or the solution; asking for forgiveness rather than permission is a practice we as a society should strive to discontinue.

Thank you for your time and attention,

## **Robert Kloek | President CEO**

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