

To: City Council Members and Mayor Hodges
From: Minneapolis Community Environmental Advisory Commission
Re: Purchase Negotiations of E. Phillips Roof Depot site for Hiawatha Water Maintenance Facility
Date: June 12, 2015

Dear Council Members and Mayor Hodges,

The Minneapolis Community Environmental Advisory Commission (CEAC) is a forum for discussion, comment and taking action on environmental issues/projects of concern to the City. CEAC members represent a broad cross section of the community: Environmental advocacy, Environmental expertise, Community representatives, and Business representatives.

On February 25th, 2014, we submitted a letter to the Council and Mayor, stating that the Minneapolis Community Environmental Advisory Commission (CEAC) was committed to eliminating the persistent, disproportionate environmental risks experienced by low-income and residents of color in Minneapolis. We called for the development of programs, such as Green Zones, that target public and private investment in neighborhoods with the highest levels of pollution and environmental degradation—where people have been exposed to the toxic effects of pollutants from heavy industry, factories, and busy highways. As is outlined in numerous city documents, including the Minneapolis Climate Action Plan and the Energy Pathways Study, these Green Zone neighborhoods should be the first in line for much-needed local, state and federal resources for parks, community gardens, energy-efficiency, renewable energy and “green” small business entrepreneurship.

Given the well-documented, disproportionate pollution burden that is facing the residents of the East Phillips neighborhood in Minneapolis, and the City's committed values on community engagement and racial equity, we are very concerned to hear that there is heavy community opposition to City staff's recommendations to enter into negotiations to purchase the Roof Depot site in East Phillips for the Hiawatha Maintenance Facility Expansion. This project and its location present a unique opportunity for the City to model its stated commitments to green zone sustainability, racial equity and meaningful community engagement - which are currently not realized.

As the Community Environmental Advisory Commission, we urge the City Council and Mayor to ensure that city properties and acquisitions work *pro-actively* to improve the health, community-vision and livability of all our neighborhoods, and that the costs of city investments not fall disproportionately on one neighborhood, such as East Phillips, while community benefits are bypassed. Furthermore, the city should not proceed to move forward with purchase negotiations until these principles are met.

Sincerely,

Minneapolis Community Environmental Advisory Commission

Cc: Sustainability Director, City Coordinators Office (Minneapolis city staff support to CEAC)