



LAND STEWARDSHIP PROJECT

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Dear City of Minneapolis Council Members:

We are writing today to request that you vote against the staff recommendation to authorize the City of Minneapolis' Property Services division to begin negotiations with the owners of Roof Depot at 1860 28th Street East and 2717 Longfellow Avenue South for municipal acquisition and operations. This proposal will be before the Ways and Means Committee on June 15, 2015 and the full City Council on June 19, 2015.

Land Stewardship Project (LSP) is a 30-year-old member driven organization working on the landscape and community level for transformational change in the food and farming system. For six years LSP has been working in deep partnership with Hope Community Inc. (Hope) around building power in community and growing healthy food in Phillips. Racial equity is an integral part of our work to build more fair, just, and healthy community based food systems for all. We know there is no sustainability with out racial equity. We talked with our members in East Phillips and they request that you vote against the staff recommendation to authorize beginning negotiations to acquire Roof Depot. As we believe that the City acquisition of Roof Depot does not align with the City's own racial equity work and expressed commitment to supporting environmental justice.

The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth states that "Through promoting and protecting the civil rights of the citizens of Minneapolis, sources of environmental pollution will not be concentrated in neighborhoods of one race or ethnicity, near sensitive populations, or in economically disadvantaged areas." By putting the water distribution function in East Phillips, the City would be further concentrating air pollution and negatively impacting air quality by adding more heavy truck traffic and welding emissions to this already environmentally overburdened community.

We are deeply concerned about the lack of community engagement and transparency around this proposal. Despite the lack of consultation with the community, the residents of East Phillips and their Neighborhood organization, cultural groups, and faith communities have come together and held a series of robust community conversations about the City's proposal. Residents have expressed a multitude of concerns related to this project: the environmental and livability impacts of increased truck traffic, emissions associated with welding, and that this proposal would take a piece of prime industrial land off the tax rolls permanently without bringing any good jobs to the community. They have come together and are calling on their elected officials to say no to the acquisition of the Roof Depot site by the City of Minneapolis.

We hope we can count on you to stand with the Phillips community by voting against the staff recommendation to begin negotiating for the purchase of the Roof Depot site.

Sincerely,

Mark Schultz
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