



*Working to protect the Mississippi River
and its watershed in the Twin Cities area.*

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May 21, 2019

Zoning Committee
City of St. Paul
25 W. 4th St., Suite 1400
St. Paul, MN 55102

Dear St. Paul Zoning Committee members,

We are writing today to share our feedback on the proposed Waterford Bay development at Island Station.

Friends of the Mississippi River (FMR) is a local non-profit organization that works to protect, restore and enhance the Mississippi River and its watershed in the Twin Cities metropolitan region. We have more than 2,700 active members, 3,500 volunteers and 2,000 advocates who care deeply about the river's unique resources.

FMR takes an active interest in working with municipalities, counties, state government, and other stakeholders to help shape and influence decisions that impact the health of the river. FMR was founded and continues to play a leadership role in ensuring that the public resources of our National Park —the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area (MNRRA), are preserved for current and future generations to benefit from. We believe that the Mississippi River belongs to all of us and that public access to and enjoyment of the river should be continually enhanced.

Island Station, where the Waterford Bay development is being proposed, is included in the Great River Passage Master Plan as a destination for river recreation and community gatherings. The plan calls for trails, a boat launch, recreation and adventure facilities, and public amenities on the site. Public ownership and involvement are emphasized. We are disappointed that the city has chosen to abandon this vision for Island Station and is considering a luxury housing development for the site instead. The Great River Passage Master Plan was developed with very extensive community input and it should be embraced by the city at every opportunity.

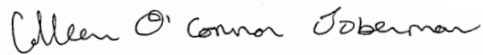
Friends of the Mississippi River has met with the Waterford Bay development team to discuss their plan. We appreciate the plan's inclusion of community access to walking trails and a nonmotorized boat launch, as well as the plan's goal of connecting to current and future parks and trails. However, the developer is seeking several variances for this project. If granted, these

variances will increase the building's impacts on the scenic and ecological functions of the Mississippi River.

If the city chooses to grant these variances and allow this housing development to move forward, we would like to see stronger public benefits in return. We suggest that more public parkland is dedicated on site. This could include, at a minimum, all shoreline, the trails connecting to adjacent properties, and the boat launch.

Setting these areas aside as public parks will ensure permanent access to these amenities for the larger community, and will strengthen equitable riverfront access for all residents regardless of their income or address. This would be the least the city can do to implement a small part of the Great River Passage Master Plan vision for Island Station. We respectfully ask the Zoning Committee to consider this request as they review the Waterford Bay application. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Colleen O'Connor Toberman". The signature is written in black ink on a light-colored background.

Colleen O'Connor Toberman
River Corridor Program Director