



Monday, March 10, 2025

Dear Commissioners Alper, Olsen, Forney, Menz, and Musich,

I am writing on behalf of the residents of the Uptown Community to express strong disappointment in your votes against the resolution to allow The Mall to remain unchanged. Your decision to oppose this resolution (2025.48) goes directly against the will of the community, which has consistently voiced strong opposition to altering the park.

As you know, there has been overwhelming feedback from residents—through EINA meetings, surveys, and the recent MPRB community meeting (2-11-2025)—calling for The Mall to remain as it is. Not a single resident of the impacted area expressed support for the proposed changes. Yet, despite these voices, you chose to vote against the resolution that would have preserved The Mall as it currently stands upon completion of the Met Council project.

The East Isles Neighborhood Association was on the other side, in support of the resolution, because we believe strongly in listening to the concerns of the residents who are most impacted. The issues around public safety, particularly with the MPRB traffic and fire studies, have not been adequately addressed. Your vote to disregard these concerns (under the guise of process) and the voices of those living closest to the park is, frankly, disheartening.

We understand the challenges you face as commissioners, but implore you to consider the long-term consequences of disregarding the community's input. And, in this case for no significant gain to the larger park system. The Mall is a critical space in our community for many residents, and maintaining its current layout made the most sense.

We appreciate the desire to move forward with a component of the Master Plan, if in fact it had been well vetted by the community and was supported as such, that was simply not the case. Just because the Met Council has planned work this year does not make it a reasonable approach to making changes.

Your votes last week failed to support the community that has long trusted you to represent its best interests. The same community that regularly leads clean ups around Lake of the Isles, helped foster the trash boom to keep the lake healthy, picks up trash on Hennepin Avenue, the number one feeder of trash via the storm water system into Lake of the Isles, cleans up along the Greenway, planted the flower beds on The Mall, purchased trees for the area and replaced all the park benches on The Mall, and funded a public safety camera for the The Mall.

At your next meeting we hope you will reconsider the importance of listening to those you serve and take action to reverse your decision.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mike Erlandson".

Mike Erlandson, Board President

East Isles Neighborhood Association