

From: Sue Swendsen <sueswendsen@gmail.com>

Sent: Wednesday, May 19, 2021 12:59 PM

To: Becca Nash <becca.nash@lccmr.leg.mn>

Subject: Re: Ranier MN pier project/safe harbor/transiet dock on Rainy Lake and boat launch, parking lot and wash station on Rainy River

Dear Representatives and committee members:

I am writing to you regarding these projects located on Rainy Lake and Rainy River in Ranier. In June 2019 I provided public written testimony to the LCCMR regarding my concerns about both of these projects. At that time I also spoke with or left messages for all members of the committee. Keep in mind these are two separate projects for which the Ranier City Council has requested funding from the LCCMR. Last year the funding was held up by the legislature.

The Council requested \$200,000 from the LCCMR for a boat launch, parking lot and cleaning station on the Rainy River--although there is one located about 1/2 mile away on the river and the local DNR says it is unnecessary and potentially unsafe. This was not approved by the LCCMR but Rep Ecklund was able to secure funding through the legislative process and it was signed by the Governor. As a result the request was returned to the LCCMR who voted to approve it after the fact in 2019. There has been no public meeting regarding this project in spite of numerous requests.

The pier project/safe harbor/transient dock project proposed for Rainy Lake in Ranier requested \$762,000. This was approved by the LCCMR but held up in the legislature last year. The Ranier City Council anticipates they will receive funding this year. They have also submitted a request to the LCCMR for \$2.1 million.

This has not been an open and transparent process -- beginning with the selection of a steering committee composed of non-residents and residents with business interests in Ranier. There has never been an open meeting requesting input verbally and in writing from residents of the community. Although the Council has placated us by stating there will be an open meeting this has never occurred. I have had communications with Becca at LCCMR, have submitted many letters to the Editor of our local paper, have spoken up frequently at Council meetings and my husband and I even submitted a petition signed by 20% of registered voters in Ranier requesting a public meeting. It was simply ignored. I believe the Council has consistently violated the open meeting law by not posting the steering committee meetings to allow the public to attend.

In reality these are economic development projects that will significantly change our city by catering to tourists and the wealthy who can afford large boats and houseboats. In addition there are also rumors currently circulating that VNP and homeland security hope to utilize this marina in the future. The residents have a right to be involved in this process since with these proposed changes the taxpayers will be responsible for the upkeep and maintenance. I also find it very concerning that the Mayor who has pushed for these projects has many conflicts of interest.

Again --- I can confirm that there have been no public meetings regarding either the pier project or the boat launch project. As members of the LCCMR -- I am hoping you will give serious considerations to our concerns. Thank you for your attention to these matters.

Sue Swendsen, Ranier 218 591 3805 sueswendsen@gmail.com