



## Staff Report for PLIUP-2603-0001

### Application Information:

**Application Type:** Interim Use Permit for Temporary Outdoor Living Site

**Location of Subject:** 1533 W Arrowhead Rd

**Legal Description:** 010-3500-00095

**Applicant:** Vineyard Christian Fellowship, Duluth

**Applicant Contact:** Melissa Hassebrock

**Agent:** CHUM

**Agent Contact:** Joel Kilgour

**Staff Contact:** Jason Mozol, [jmozol@duluthmn.gov](mailto:jmozol@duluthmn.gov)

### Deadline for Action:

**Application Date:** March 10, 2026

**Date Extension Letter Mailed:** March 23, 2026

**60 Days:** May 9, 2026

**120 Days:** July 8, 2026

**Site Visit Date:** April 8, 2026

**Sign Notice Date:** March 31, 2026

**Neighbor Letter Date:** March 23, 2026

**Number of Letters Sent:** 38

### Proposal:

This one-year Interim Use Permit would allow for 2026 operation of Safe Bay, an overnight parking lot, at the Vineyard Church. This parking lot operates seasonally. This program previously operated at the Damiano Center in 2023 and 2024 and at the Vineyard Church in 2025.

### Recommended Action:

Staff recommends approval with conditions.

### Zoning and Land Use:

	Current Zoning	Existing Land Use	Future Land Use Map Designation
<b>Subject</b>	R-2	Church	Urban Residential/ Low Density Neighborhood
<b>North</b>	R-1	Residential	Low Density Neighborhood
<b>South</b>	R-1	Residential	Traditional Neighborhood
<b>East</b>	R-2	Open Space	Neighborhood Mixed Use/ Low Density Neighborhood
<b>West</b>	R-2	Residential	Urban Residential/ Low Density Neighborhood

### Summary of Code Requirements:

**50-20.1.I: Use-specific standards for Interim Outdoor Living Site:** Criteria regarding site design, required facilities, and operations the site must satisfy.

**50-37.10.E: Interim Use Permit Criteria:** Authorizes the city to issue an interim use permit that authorizes a special use to exist until a specified date.

## Comprehensive Plan Governing Principle and/or Policies and Current History (if applicable):

Principle #13 – Develop a healthy community. Safe Bay allows a place for people without housing to sleep safely in their cars, with access to bathrooms and other services.

Principle #14 – Integrate fairness in to the fabric of the community. Safe Bay provides people living in cars a designated, legal place to stay with access to basic amenities.

### **Future Land Use:**

*Urban Residential:* A transitional use between more intensive commercial uses and purely residential neighborhoods.

*Low Density Neighborhood:* Single-family housing with urban services. Non-residential uses are mainly uses such as schools and churches.

**History:** CHUM has been providing services to people in need for over 50 years. Safe Bay is a portion of their programming that works to address homelessness. Safe Bay operated under an interim use permit in 2023 and 2024 at the Damiano Center and in 2025 at the Vineyard Church, providing safe and secure overnight parking and sleeping places for people living in cars.

In 2025, the site served 160 individuals, of which 20 were able to secure permanent housing. On a typical night, 10-12 people stayed at the site with the highest usage night serving 25 people.

## Review and Discussion Items:

Staff finds:

- 1) CHUM and the Vineyard Church will propose an overnight parking lot. This is only for people sleeping in vehicles (not tents or other sleeping facilities). It will operate seasonally during the warmer months, May through October, and only at night (5:30 pm – 8:30 am). Vehicles will park in the existing, paved rear lot. Other parking lots in the front of the property will provide parking for other uses.
- 2) Safe Bay provides bathroom facilities, garbage and recycling dumpsters, and a sharps container, all meeting the requirements of UDC Section 50-20.1.I.
- 3) The maximum occupancy for this site is 50 people. In 2025 an average of 10-12 people stayed each night, with the highest usage night serving 25 people.
- 4) All minors present on the site will be accompanied by a parent or guardian.
- 5) Staff from CHUM and overnight hosts provide oversight at all hours the facility is open. The staff and hosts document vehicles and guests, ensure quiet hours from 10:00 pm to 6:00 am, and monitor all activities on site.
- 6) In case of an emergency, such as an extreme weather event, the Vineyard Church facility is available for shelter.
- 7) Staff finds that the Applicant's proposed combination of an existing rock berm that is over 6' tall and temporary screening system with an opaque mesh/fabric barrier, which the Land Use Supervisor found to meet the requirements for opacity in Chapter 50, Article 6 of the Code, provide sufficient screening along lot lines shared with residential uses and satisfy the dense urban screening requirements and finds that no current residential use exists on vacant Parcel ID 010-3500-0010 and therefore no screening is required along lot lines shared with this parcel.
- 8) No additional exterior lighting will be provided.
- 9) A time limit on this Interim Use Permit is required because this is an interim living site. The time period for this use shall be one year from the date of approval.

10) Plans have been reviewed by the Fire Marshall without any comments.

11) Public comments from a resident and an organization have been submitted in opposition. No other public, agency, or City comments have been received.

### **Staff Recommendation:**

Based on the above findings, Staff recommends that Planning Commission approve the Interim Use Permit with the following conditions:

- 1) The project be limited to, constructed, and maintained according to the information submitted with the application and all criteria in UDC Section 50-20.1.1.
- 2) This Interim Use Permit has a duration of one year and shall expire one year from the date of approval; however, the site will only be open from May - October.
- 3) Before operation commences, the applicant will ensure that the operator's name, telephone number, and e-mail address are posted on the site and easily visible to the public and will provide a photo of this signage on the site to the Land Use Supervisor.
- 4) A fence permit must be obtained from the City prior to any construction of permanent fencing.
- 5) Any alterations to the approved plans that do not alter major elements of the plan may be approved by the Land Use Supervisor without further Planning Commission; however, no such administrative approval shall constitute a variance from the provisions of UDC Chapter 50.

# Staff Report Map for PLIUP-2603-0001:

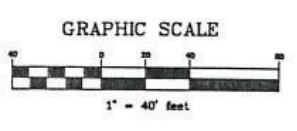
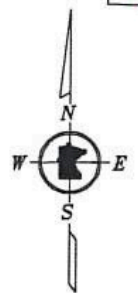


**Figure 1.** Aerial imagery captured in 2025, showing Parcels #010-3500-00095 outlined along the north side of W Arrowhead Rd.

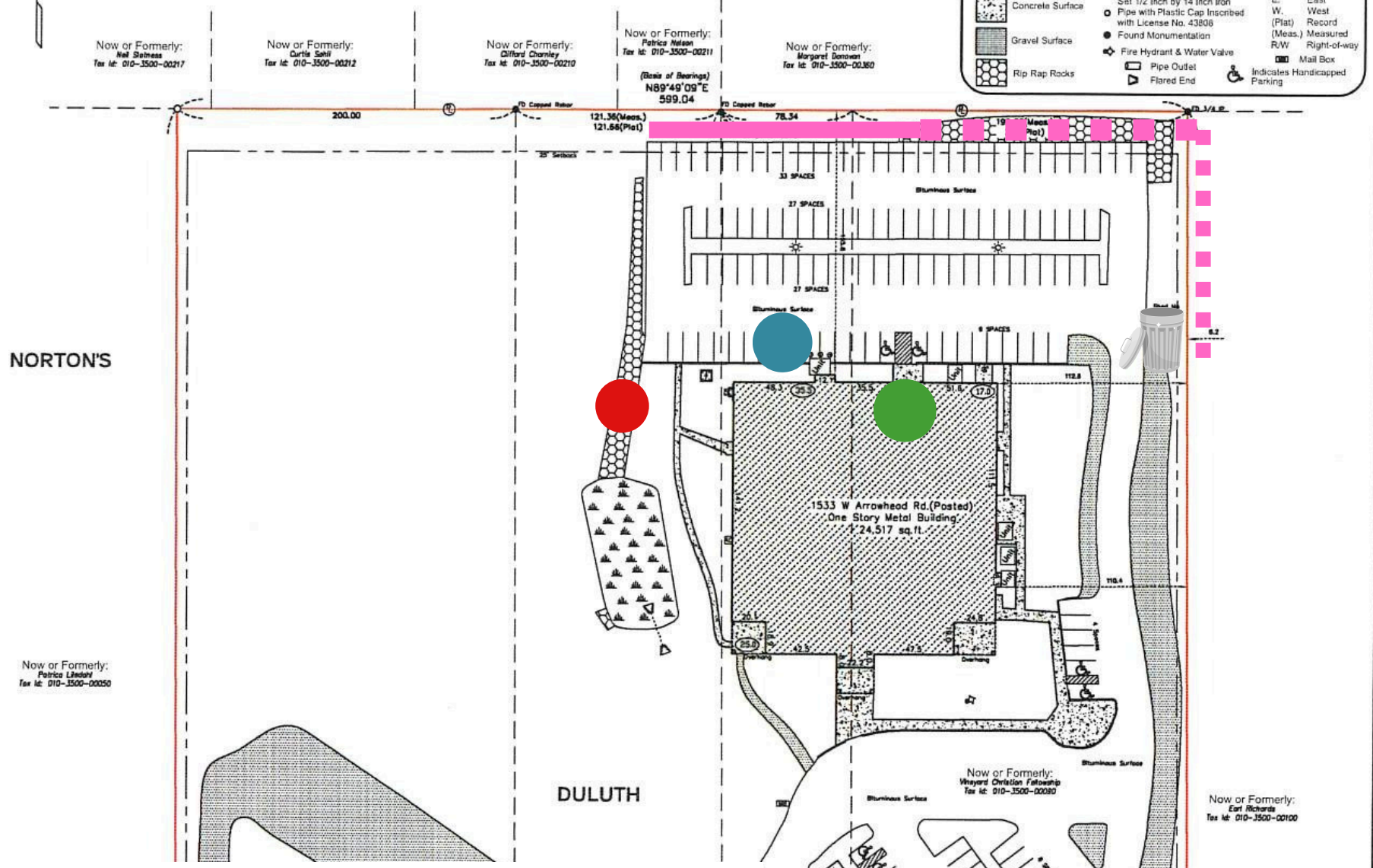
The City of Duluth has tried to ensure that the information contained in this map or electronic document is accurate. The City of Duluth makes no warranty or guarantee concerning the accuracy or reliability. This drawing/data is neither a legally recorded map nor a survey and is not intended to be used as one. The drawing/data is a compilation of records, information and data located in various City, County and State offices and other sources affecting the area shown and is to be used for reference purposes only. The City of Duluth shall not be liable for errors contained within this data provided or for any damages in connection with the use of this information contained within.

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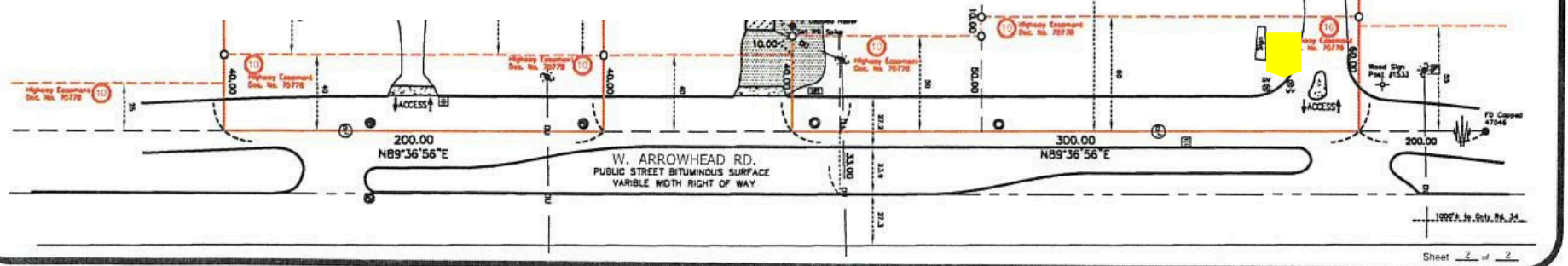
Light Pole	Sanitary Sewer	Gas Valve
Water Valve	Wall Mount Gas Meter	Storm Inlet (Square)
Fire Hydrant	Property Line	Storm Inlet (Round)
Stamess Fire Hydrant- Stand Pipe	Telephone Pedestal	Indicates Building Height at That Spot
Wall Mount Electric Meter	Low Area	Overhead Line
Electric Transformer	PVC Pipe	Hand Hole
Building Foot Print	Site Access	Fence Line
Concrete Surface	Utility Pole	N. North
Gravel Surface	Utility Pole w/ Transformer	S. South
Rip Rap Rocks	Guy Wire	E. East
	Set 1/2 inch by 14 inch iron Pipe with Plastic Cap Inscribed with License No. 43806	W. West
	Found Monumentation	(Plat) Record
	Fire Hydrant & Water Valve	(Meas.) Measured
	Pipe Outlet	R/W Right-of-way
	Flared End	Mail Box
		Indicates Handicapped Parking



**Safe Bay at Vineyard Church**

Outdoor areas designated for the program includes the north parking lot and exercise/play area, from the church to the north property line and from the exercise area to the east property line.

-  Program entrance
-  Building entrance. Open during all Safe Bay hours. Includes access to staff desk and intake area, bathrooms, garbage, shower, sharps containers and potable water
-  Trash disposal. Marker indicates location of existing wildlife proof dumpster. Garbage cans with lids will be placed outside during early evening hours and morning cleanup and kept indoors overnight
-  Exercise area. Includes children's playground and designated pet walking area to the west of the parking lot within sight of staff
-  Smoking area with smokers post. 25' from building entrance.
-  Property line markers
-  6' privacy screening or 6' permanent fencing



# Safe Bay 2026

**Purpose:** To provide safe, overnight parking for individuals and families experiencing homelessness and living in a personal vehicle; to allow for program participants to rest, meet basic hygiene needs and connect with housing navigation and social services. This is a continuation of an existing successful program that was operated at Damiano Center during summer 2023 and summer 2024, and at Vineyard during summer 2025.

**Hours of Operation:** 5:30pm-8:30am, 7 days a week, May 1 - October 31

**Staffing:** Chum staff will be onsite during all hours of operation

**Chum management:** Drew Filkins, Chum Satellite Shelter Manager  
Denine Rushing, Chum Operations Director

**Vineyard Church contacts:** Melissa Hassebrock, Office Manager  
Barry Schull, Compassion Ministries Director

**Location:** North parking lot of Vineyard Church (1533 W Arrowhead Road)

**Qualifications to participate:** Any individual or family that relies on a vehicle as their primary shelter, and agrees to follow program guidelines

## Operations:

- Two members of Chum staff or one member of Chum staff and one or more trained and vetted volunteers will be present during all hours of operation
- Clients will register with staff before parking and be assigned a parking spot
- Clients will sleep in their vehicles
- Children will be allowed but must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian at all times
- Pets are allowed but must be cleaned up after and leashed if outside of a vehicle
- Additional Chum staff - including a dedicated street outreach worker onsite four nights a week, a peer support specialist, and community health worker - will be available periodically to assist clients with navigating housing and services
- Clients must leave the parking lot at program closing time unless participating in specific church programming or meeting with Chum staff
- Clients must follow program guidelines
  - No visitors
  - Don't enter other people's vehicles
  - No alcohol, cannabis or drug use on Vineyard property or within two blocks of Vineyard property; driving while intoxicated will not be tolerated
  - Quiet time 10pm-6am
  - Respect others' property and personal space
  - Children must always be supervised by a parent or legal guardian
  - No weapons, no violence and no threats of violence
  - Clean up after yourself
  - Leash and clean up after your pets

## Facilities:

- Clients will enter the program from Arrowhead Road and park in the rear of the Vineyard Church building
- The church building will be open during hours of operation and clients may enter from the rear entrance. Potable water, bathrooms, showers, WiFi, garbage disposal and sharps disposal will be available. Two single

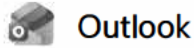
bathrooms are available to clients in the main staging area. Two other multi-stall bathrooms can be opened if needed, for a total of 11 available toilets. At least one bathroom is fully ADA accessible.

- An existing church dumpster is wildlife proof. Smaller garbage bins with lids will be placed in the parking lot during early evening hours and morning cleanup, and moved inside overnights.
- There is an exterior light on the building above the program entrance, and two lights in the parking lot.
- 3 exterior security cameras and 2 interior security cameras have been installed.
- A fenced children's play area and picnic tables will be available for client use.
- Smoking will be allowed 25 feet from the building entrance and a smokers' post will be provided for client use to dispose of cigarette butts. The smokers post will be checked and maintained daily by Chum and Vineyard staff.
- Clients will have access to designated program areas within the building during all program hours but are not allowed to sleep inside. In the event of a weather emergency (such as tornado or damaging hail), staff will move clients to the church basement to shelter.
- Safe Bay program contact information will be shared with all immediately adjacent neighbors and posted on the rear entrance of the church.

### **Screening and property demarcation:**

The north and east property lines of the church are identified by 16 property markers. The western edge of the parking lot is not on a property line, and the east property line is not adjacent to residential property, therefore neither require dense urban screening per UDC. The north property line is partially covered by a berm which meets requirements of dense urban screening. A remaining 140' from the berm to the western edge of the parking lot will require additional screening. 6' opaque fabric screening will be installed on this length of the property line, with plans for permanent fencing later in the summer. Photo examples below.





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**FW: Safe Bay Comment**

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**From:** Kenwood Neighbors [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, April 6, 2026 7:29 PM  
**To:** Roger Reinert <rreinert@DuluthMN.gov>; planning <planning@DuluthMN.gov>  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Safe Bay Comment

We oppose this program. When will the permanent fencing be installed? The application says that the illegal screen from last year will be replaced with permanent fencing. The program shouldn't get a permit until the required fencing is up. What will it be made of and how are you guaranteeing the required 6 feet tall and 75% opacity?

Did they also get a fencing permit?

When will they screen the commercial trash containers? They are not in compliance and have no screening around them. This was reported to the city last year and it is still not screened.

This is a comment on PLIUP-2603-0001.

Kenwood Neighbors United

P.S. Safe bay wasn't open 2,000 nights last year so that's a disingenuous overinflated statement on purpose and not how days work.

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Greetings All,

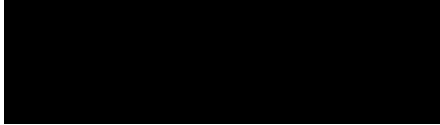
I hope you had a wonderful winter. The Safe Bay season is just around the corner; we plan to open at the beginning of May.

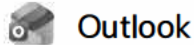
We had an amazing season last year. We served 164 individuals, of whom 100 stayed for more than one night. Of our regular guests, 20% of them found permanent housing. Many others got connected with vital services and resources on their journey back to stability. We provided over 2,000 nights of rest and safety to our guests. We also had a wonderful group of volunteers who supported the Safe Bay program. We had 57 volunteers help out, totaling over 950 hours of service. We were thrilled to have such great community support.

The neighborhood/community meeting will be held on Thursday, April 9, at 5:30 pm in the Vineyard Church lobby. Hope to see you there.

Regards,

**Drew Filkins (he/him)**  
Stability Services Manager





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**FW: Outdoor living site at Vineyard church**

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**From:** toniljedahl [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Tuesday, March 31, 2026 2:44 PM

**To:** Karla Culhane <kculhane@DuluthMN.gov>; Roger Reinert <rreinert@DuluthMN.gov>; Wendy Durrwachter <wdurrwachter@DuluthMN.gov>; Diane Desotelle <ddesotelle@DuluthMN.gov>; Roz Randorf <rrandorf@DuluthMN.gov>; David Clanaugh <dclanaugh@DuluthMN.gov>; Janet Kennedy <jkennedy@DuluthMN.gov>; Arik Forsman <aforsman@DuluthMN.gov>; Lynn Marie Nephew <lnephew@DuluthMN.gov>; Terese Tomanek <ttomanek@DuluthMN.gov>; planning <planning@DuluthMN.gov>

**Subject:** Outdoor living site at Vineyard church

I am sending this email with the concerns that I have for this outdoor living site. And My findings from the original Permit with requirements that we're not followed. And the church was given its certificate of occupancy without requirements being met.

The original permit for the church to be built-in an R2 zoning. I found it a little surprising that To build an assembly in that zoning area only requires a yes from the planning Department with possible some extra restrictions without any feedback from the adjacent property owners that purchased homes zoned for residential.

One of the requirements for the permit was a fence along the property lines shared with residential properties that was not done. I'm assuming there wasn't an escrow set up. Along with the landscaping requirements. With out the requirements required to receive the permit Being done the certificate of Occupancy was given. Without any consequences. With failing the final inspection Because of not meeting. the requirements, The certificate of occupancy should not have been given. or only giving a temporary C. O.

To put A fence up along a property line and also a survey to do New build And an as built after.. The property lines should have been surveyed and marked with marker's So many feet apart. Was that done??

The overflow parking area is an interim use permit. Which should have to be renewed either every 2 or 5 years. It is next to the West property line Which is shared with our property line, which is our East property line. From looking at it, it is very close to the property line. I would like to know what the setback requirements are for that. What the screening requirements are and the fact that it's interim use. Why were we not contacted about This parking lot?

I would like to know also what the setback requirements are for the assembly being built in a residential area for the sides and the rear.

The city's general provisions states to preserve the integrity of residential areas and enhance property values. I have contacted several real estate agents and appraisers and all of them

stated that Having homeless people living in their cars next to a property would decrease its Value.

We have never been notified by the city of the church being built and The outdoor living site. Again, the churches West property line is our East property line. And we are residential, we should have been Contacted like everyone else. I don't understand why we weren't. The property lines should be properly marked and fence put up Per the requirements for the church to have been given the permit in the first place.

I am concerned, that In the past, Requirements were not met and there were no consequences that the requirements that are for this outdoor living site will not be followed strictly either. I have discussed these site With code compliance people.

And what I have heard is that generally There is A problem with sanitation, garbage, fires, propane tanks, vehicles Being left that need to be hauled away. Requirements are for sanitation are So many bathroom's for a maximum number of people. I would like to know how that is going to be met. How many bathrooms are in the church? Are you going to be bringing in port A potty. Requirement for people to be on-site monitoring. If there is a problem, will they be calling The police. Who will be carrying the liability insurance. I would like to know what insurance company will cover a policy. And whose paying for it and it needs to be proven that is going to be paid upfront.

The day that they're going to have mechanics there to work on vehicles if the mechanics want to Give their time, The people should bring their cars to those shops. Working with any hazardous materials need to be disposed of properly, handled properly, and that needs to be done in a repair shop.

Advertising this site even before the discussion and permit has been given, Leads me to believe that a few people have decided that this is going to happen.

I have read through all of the Meetings, letters by the residents, letters from people that approve of this, and the fact that there have been threats against people against this site should have been addressed, and the police should have contacted them for making those threats. I find it disingenuous of people saying that the people against it, especially the people that live right next door to the site are not in my Neighborhood people when those people will definitely not have it in their neighborhood.

The provision for staff to be present and from what I am reading There will be 2 people. So what happens when there's only 1 person or no one shows up to supervise.

They're probably isn't anyone that would say that there needs to be To be Met and answers to help people experiencing homelessness. I do not think that having this type of site in a residential neighborhood is appropriate. I read one of the suggestions was using the empty K mart area. I would like to suggest considering Lester park golf course there is A parking area next to a closed club house, which has both men and women's facilities. And a place to gather where the social workers could meet with people to help them with resources and also the area has a significant distance from any residential areas, And has nice open green spaces. when I was out there A couple years ago was still being Mowed . I also read that a grant is possible, which is a significant amount. And that could help the city with the costs of that property, which has been closed now for many years and has not moved ahead with being used for something else other than the golf course. The city already owns the property. Maybe that should be considered a place to build shelters for people in need.

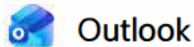
I will be at the April 14th meeting. And I am open to being contacted beforehand.

Thank you,

Toni Liljedahl



Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy tablet



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**FW: Outdoor living site at Vineyard church**

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**From:** toni [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 2, 2026 10:19 AM  
**To:** Karla Culhane <kculhane@DuluthMN.gov>; Roger Reinert <rreinert@DuluthMN.gov>; Wendy Durrwachter <wdurrwachter@DuluthMN.gov>; Diane Desotelle <d-desotelle@DuluthMN.gov>; Roz Randorf <rrandorf@DuluthMN.gov>; David Clanaugh <dclanaugh@DuluthMN.gov>; Janet Kennedy <jkennedy@DuluthMN.gov>; Arik Forsman <aforsman@DuluthMN.gov>; Lynn Marie Nephew <lnephew@DuluthMN.gov>; Terese Tomanek <tomanek@DuluthMN.gov>; planning <planning@DuluthMN.gov>  
**Subject:** Re: Outdoor living site at Vineyard church

I received an email back from Sam Smith and Terese Tomanek, stating they have received my message and that some of my questions will be answered at the meeting. The meeting is for the outdoor living space. The other questions I have in that email I would like answered as soon as possible concerning the Set back requirements that don't meet your own guidelines. The requirements that were put on the permit for the church an assembly to be built in a residential area. Namely, the fence requirement . It did say fence was never done and still allowed their certificate of occupancy.The encroachments into the setbacks. Why we have not been notified about the outdoor living space before? Now the overflow parking lot. Which is a interim permit. I would like to have notification of all those permits being reissued and the dates.

The woods are not a buffer, and the woods, are not on the churches property. If I cut all those trees down They wouldn't be there so that cannot be considered as a buffer. I can stand on our back porch  
And see the church.

Please answer the questions and concerns that we have.  
That are not going to be answered at the outdoor living meeting.

Also I am filing a formal complaint against a property. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] For code compliance, the property has been covered in the front of the house to the road with old boats, cars, trash and junk for years.

Thank you,  
Toni Liljedahl

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)