



City Council Vice President Andrea Jenkins – 8th Ward

350 S. Fifth St. - Room 307

Minneapolis, MN 55415

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April 7, 2021

The Honorable Ilhan Omar:

I am writing to voice support for Sabathani Community Center's proposed District 5 Community Funding Project to provide needed infrastructure and weatherization improvements by replacing the roof of this 100-year old South Minneapolis institution. This project would address critical needed repairs and energy efficiency upgrades to the Sabathani Community Center building that would enable Sabathani's 50-year legacy to continue as a critical community hub.

At the heart of South Minneapolis, and cornerstone of the [38th Street Thrive Strategic Development Plan](#) which was [approved by the Minneapolis City Council last month](#), Sabathani Community Center embodies a strong and vibrant community. Sabathani has served as a pillar for community identity, empowerment and social change since 1966. A major part of community vision is to strengthen the vitality, resilience and partnership of the people who live and work in the district. Sabathani offers an array of direct community services including; neighborhood food shelf, Seniors Program, Community-based Health and Wellness, Clothing Closet, Senior Housing Development Project: A 48-unit residential development providing affordable housing for seniors 55 and older, and Community Businesses: a lease program offering commercial space for rent at competitive rates to over 20 black-owned businesses.

As a major cultural asset, it is vital that we invest and renovate Sabathani Community Center to preserve its legacy in providing the community space to build relationships, conduct business and support each other as neighbors. First, we must make needed infrastructure investments in this historic building.

As a strong and vibrant community, with a legacy of overcoming the odds we want to enhance our ability to recover from traumas, disturbances, shocks or stresses due to climate change, power outages, medical outbreaks, fires or other human-caused disasters. Resources like Sabathani help people deal with resiliency challenges. Our vision is to create a Resilience Hub to serve as a facility in supporting the community before, during, and after disruptions by 1) mitigating climate change using resilient energy systems, 2) providing opportunities for the community's benefit with a solar farm cooperative, 3) providing local emergency management and communication, 4) coordinating the distribution of essential resources - shelter, water, food, medical supplies etc. when needed, and 5) creating a mobility hub with bike lanes, bus transit, bike parking and wheelchair accessibility, etc.

We are particularly interested in the ways that we can support community priorities of education, health, and equity by implementing deep retrofits in buildings occupied by organizations that contribute to community well-being and have broad public support for their missions. Sabathani represents that type of building and organization – meeting critical needs of and serving as a model and a meeting place for the community. Improvements in comfort, air quality, and lower utility bills of their building will directly support the organization's fundamental goal of providing people with the essential resources to improve their lives and build a thriving community, as well as the resilience of the surrounding neighborhoods.

We have experienced unprecedented events in our city this past year – with the murder of George Floyd only three blocks away and the associated uprising for racial justice, and the intersecting crises of a public health pandemic, rising unemployment, and housing insecurity. Sabathani is among the organizations that

have risen to meet the moment and the needs on the Southside. With this support, the Sabathani can plan for upgrading the building to continue to serve as that pillar of the community – a provider of critical food security and housing services, an incubator for businesses, and a space for neighborhood meetings and events. I have seen the role that Sabathani can and does play in this community and would be thrilled to see the building serve as a model for advanced energy technologies in a historic building and a demonstration of climate solutions through a racial equity lens.

I hope you will support the Sabathani Community Center's Community Funding Project. Thank you for your attention to this important opportunity to advance progress on climate and racial equity in our South Minneapolis community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrea", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Andrea Jenkins



Center for Energy and Environment

October 29, 2020

Tanessa Greene, Executive Director
Sabathani Community Center
310 East 38th Street
Saint Paul, MN 55409

Dear Ms. Greene:

On behalf of Center For Energy And Environment (CEE), I am pleased to commit our services to help improve the energy efficiency of the Sabathani Community Center (SCC). For decades, SCC has served Minneapolis as a critical community institution and we are pleased to help SCC assess and support the installation and implementation of upgrading your HVAC system and any other cost-effective improvements where we can be of assistance.

We certainly support your efforts to raise funds for these improvements and look forward to partnering as you make more progress on securing this funding.

If we can be of any assistance, please contact Erik Ennen, Facility Services Manager on our Commercial Programs team at eenen@mncee.org, 612-819-7245.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Chris Duffrin'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Chris Duffrin, President