

# John (Jay) Cowles III

708 South Third Street, Suite 505E  
Minneapolis, MN 55415-1116

November 11, 2013

Mr. Jeremy Hanson Willis, Director  
City of Minneapolis, Community Planning & Economic Development  
105 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Suite 200  
Minneapolis, MN 55401

Dear Mr. Hanson Willis:

I am writing in support of Ryan Companies' request for authorization to demolish the 425 Portland Avenue building, as part of their proposed Downtown East redevelopment.

As the Cowles family owned the StarTribune newspaper (in its various forms and names) for many decades, and as I personally served as Chairman of Cowles Media Company until its sale in 1998, I appreciate concern with preserving the legacy of our Minneapolis newspaper. However, the physical building is not the important part of the StarTribune's history. The building itself outlived its original functionality long ago. You will recall that printing, distribution and fleet activities were moved to the Warehouse District with the completion of our Heritage Center manufacturing facilities decades ago. Because the StarTribune is a newspaper, much of its history is already well documented and preserved. If desired, the newspaper's history could be further memorialized in any number of other ways.

I am happy to support Ryan's proposed development of a two-block urban park adjacent to the new Vikings Stadium, in place of the 425 Portland Avenue building. This public space, located next to the proposed two-block development of office, housing and retail on contiguous blocks to the north or "riverside" of the park, will provide critical green space and community gathering space for all of the residents, employees, and visitors to downtown. I envision such a strategic public space as energizing new development in the East Downtown area, and providing a highly-valued experience which further defines downtown Minneapolis as an outstanding place to work, live, and play. This vision is certainly consistent with the intent of the Cowles family when the Star Tribune donated the land for the site of the Metrodome nearly three decades ago.

If for any reason you would like to discuss this further, I would be happy to meet with you. Thanks for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Cowles III". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and "C".

John Cowles III

Cc: Rick Collins, Ryan Companies ✓